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THE
EARLY LETTERS OF
WILLIAM AND DOROTHY
WORDSWORTH
(1787–1805)

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WILLIAM AND DOROTHY
WORDSWORTH
(1787-1805)

Arranged and Edited by
ERNEST DE SELINCOURT

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
1935

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C. 4
London Edinburgh Glasgow
New York Toronto Melbourne
Capetown Bombay Calcutta
Madras Shanghai
HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE
UNIVERSITY

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

PREFACE

THIS volume aims at giving a text, as full and trustworthy as I can make it, of the letters written by William and Dorothy Wordsworth before the end of the year 1805: subsequent volumes will contain the letters written in the Middle Years (1806–1820), and in the Last Years (1821–1850).

In bringing out the letters in three instalments I have been actuated by two motives. In the first place, it is my hope that the appearance of this volume will induce those collectors who have in their possession letters I have been unable to trace, to communicate with me, and thus to co-operate in making this edition of the fullest possible value to students of the poet: in the second, I feel that an adequate text of the letters is overdue. To collect and edit a correspondence that extends over sixty-three years is a formidable undertaking; it has already occupied my leisure during the last decade, and though the work on the remaining letters is now far advanced, I am unwilling longer to withhold material which helps to a fuller understanding of the most vital period in Wordsworth's life and work. The largest collection hitherto attempted, Professor William Knight's *Letters of the Wordsworth Family*, 3 vols., 1907, has for some years been out of print, and it does not meet the exacter requirements of modern scholarship. A comparison of its text with the manuscripts reveals many inaccuracies; to some letters a wrong addressee is given, and the editorial dating of letters left undated by the writer is often wide of the mark. But the collection is no less deficient in quantity than in quality. Of the 241 letters included in this volume 101¹ are not to be found in Knight's edition, and they contain much that is of high biographical value. Those addressed to Richard Wordsworth disclose the financial worries, which, augmented as they were by the incorrigible dilatoriness of this lawyer brother, were a constant source of irritating anxiety: those written to Mary Hutchinson

¹ Many of these have been quoted, in part or in full, in my *Life of Dorothy Wordsworth*, but have not appeared elsewhere.

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before her marriage, to Coleridge and to Lady Beaumont, throw a fuller light on the passionate devotion of both William and Dorothy to their dearest friend, add to our knowledge of the composition and early drafts of several of the poems, and reveal with vividness and intimacy of detail a home life of rare and moving beauty.

To some 60 of the remaining 140 letters I have been able to substitute a full text for Professor Knight's abbreviated version, and many of the restored passages have a value similar to that of the letters hitherto unprinted. It was Knight's opinion that 'purely personal and family matters, and trivial details, must be left out', though he admits that in so doing 'very original and characteristic passages have to be set aside': the modern reader will probably prefer to have the whole document before him, and skimming lightly over that matter which, as is inevitable in all correspondence, is of a purely ephemeral interest, to select for himself what is significant. Moreover, in letters written a hundred years ago, the most trivial or homely passage may have an interest of its own, throwing light upon household habits or social customs long outworn, or preserving for us some lively idiom now lost to current speech.

It has proved impossible to discover the whereabouts of all the originals; some of those (e.g.) quoted in the *Memoirs* of 1851 are doubtless irretrievably lost, others which passed through the hands of Professor Knight, and were afterwards dispersed, have eluded all attempts at rediscovery. But wherever the manuscripts have been traceable I have printed from them, in most cases from the holograph or a photostat of it, in the remainder from a careful transliteration which has been communicated to me. The authority for my text is stated at the top left-hand corner of each letter, together with the previous books, if any, in which the letter has appeared; the sign (—) appended to the citation of a book indicates that only a portion of the letter is to be found there.

Letters printed from the manuscripts are reproduced as they were written, and characteristic spellings and capricious use of capitals have been retained. But to this practice I have made some exceptions. Where the writer has placed the date and address at the end of his letter I have transferred it, for the con-

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venience of the reader, to its normal position as a heading ; and where a wrong word has been written I have substituted in my text the word intended by the writer, noting the change at the bottom of the page. More trivial *lapsus calami*, accidental droppings of a letter from a word, or mis-spellings obviously due to hurried writing, are as a rule silently corrected.¹ To record all of these, followed by an offensive [*sic*], would be mere pedantry ; moreover, it would not everywhere be possible. For it should be borne in mind that the rapid writer does not exactly form all his letters, so that one often deciphers his words by intuition rather than by a meticulous scrutiny of each stroke of his pen ; and in such cases there is no choice between a photographic reproduction of the script and the adoption of the normal spelling. Both William and Dorothy Wordsworth subside in different places to different degrees of illegibility, for which their frequent apologies are not entirely uncalled for. It is notorious that William had an abnormal physical disability to penmanship, and his calligraphy, always bad, is sometimes execrable. 'I am', he told De Quincey (July 23, 1806), 'the most lazy and impatient Letter writer in the world. You will probably have observed that the first two or three lines of this sheet are in a tolerably fair, legible hand, and now every letter, from A to Z, is a complete rout, one on the heels of another.' Dorothy could write beautifully when she chose to take the trouble, but, as she herself admits, she liked to do everything as quick as she could, and where her penmanship is careless she defends it as 'a proof that I feel no ceremony between us, and that I write as to an old acquaintance'.² 'My eyes ache very much', she says in another place,³ 'so I must conclude. I have written as fast as

¹ Similarly, whilst I have kept the original punctuation wherever it is intelligible, I have not scrupled to alter it when it distorts the sense, as the writer would himself have done had he read through his letter before dispatching it. And I have not everywhere retained the dash, which a rapid writer often employs for purposes other than that for which it is intended. Indeed, it is not always easy to decide whether the mark on the paper is meant for a short dash, a comma, or a full stop, and when the dash is unmistakable it is often meant, from a desire to economize space, to indicate a fresh paragraph. In all such cases my practice has been determined by the wish to present a readable document.

² To Lady Beaumont, July 25, 1804.

³ To Lady B., Sept. 23, 1804.

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possible for their sakes ; so excuse blunders—but that indeed is only as heretofore, for when I have not weak eyes I have always some reason or other, some feeling or disposition which makes me write letters or any manuscript which I am not *copying* in a careless slovenly manner—in this I am very like my Brother William.' And when it is remembered that much of her correspondence was dashed off at odd moments snatched from pressing household duties—out of doors, or perhaps with a baby on her knee, or in haste to catch the post, the wonder is rather that there is so little that is incoherent or illegible. In those few places where I have failed to read a word, my text records it with a [?].

As a matter of fact, time, rather than the writers, is responsible for the worst defects of the manuscripts. They are not all now in the condition in which, more than a century ago, they were dispatched to their recipients. In some the ink is faded, in others the edges, and more than the edges, have crumbled or been torn away, or holes made by the tearing of the seal. Any additions to my text rendered necessary by such defects are placed in square brackets: where the words supplied are doubtful they are preceded by a note of interrogation ; brackets with no enclosure indicate a lacuna that baffles conjecture.

I have not thought it expedient to write an elaborate biographical and critical introduction to this volume. Most of the letters included in it explain themselves and one another, and my interpretation of the incidents they record, together with my reading of the main characters who appear in them, can be found in my *Life of Dorothy Wordsworth*, which was largely based on the material that is here presented ; I have, however, supplied such explanatory notes as seemed likely to prove helpful to the student. Much otherwise necessary annotation has been spared by setting forth, in genealogical tables placed at the end of the book, the different connexions and ramifications of the Wordsworth family, and in these tables are the names of many persons who figure in the letters ; of others passingly alluded to I have not thought it necessary to give further details ; nor would it have always been possible, for of some of them nothing is known save what is recorded in the text. A map of

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the Lake country is also supplied, from which the situation of many places referred to in the text can be identified.

The letters collected in this volume have found many resting places. All but two or three of the letters to Mrs. Clarkson, the letters to Poole, one to Losh (75), and one to Stuart (125), are in the British Museum; the majority of those written to Cottle form a part of the Forster Bequest in the Victoria and Albert Museum; for permission to consult the rest for the purposes of this edition I am indebted to the kindness of the Trustees of private libraries or of individual owners. My first obligation is to Mr. Gordon Wordsworth, who gave me free access to his rich collection of family letters, of letters to Coleridge and the Beaumonts, and one to Losh (205). Only second in importance to these is the correspondence of Dorothy Wordsworth with Jane Pollard, afterwards Mrs. John Marshall, which is the fullest authority for the early history of the Wordsworth family; these I owe to the kindness of Miss Catherine Marshall. To the Trustees of the Harvard University Library I am indebted for one letter (120), to the Trustees of the Henry Huntingdon Library for the letter to Fox (116) and the four to Wrangham (49, 53, 55, 117). The letters to Scott I owe to Mr. Hugh Walpole, the letters to De Quincey to Miss Bairdsmith, and those to Richard Sharp to the Hon. Mrs. Eustace Hills; to each of the following I owe one letter; Mr. J. Barnett (51), Mr. J. A. Purves (83), Mr. Roger Clarke (87), Mr. C. B. Tinker (118), Colonel M. G. Sotheby (164), Mr. Raisley Moorsom (43). Mr. Moorsom also supplied me with the information given in the note on p. 265. For all this generous help I here record my most grateful thanks. The name of the lady who, many years ago, sent me the manuscripts of Nos. 81 and 161, has unfortunately been mislaid, but I hope that if this volume comes into her hands she will pardon my negligence, and realize that my gratitude is not the less sincere.

Finally, my cordial thanks are due, once again, to Mr. Gordon Wordsworth for placing at my disposal his unrivalled knowledge of all that touches upon the history of his family, for reading my proofs, and making many valuable suggestions; to Miss Freda Thompson for ungrudging help extending over many

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years in transcribing and checking the copy, reading proofs, and making the index, to the Oxford University Press for the care with which they have produced the volume, and to the Research Committee of the University of Birmingham for substantial grants towards the expenses of obtaining photostats and copying manuscripts.

E. de S.

GRASMERE

April 1935.

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ABBREVIATIONS, ETC., USED IN THIS VOLUME

W. W., D. W., J. W., R. W. ; William, Dorothy, John, and Richard Wordsworth.

C.: *Memorials of Coleorton*, ed. by William Knight, 2 vols., 1887.

Cottle: *Early Recollections, chiefly relating to the Life of S. T. Coleridge*, by Joseph Cottle, 2 vols., 1837.

G.: *The Prose Works of William Wordsworth*, ed. by Alex. B. Grosart, 3 vols., 1876.

Harper: *W. W. His Life, Work, and Influence*, by George McLean Harper, 2 vols., 1916.

J.: *Memorials of De Quincey*, ed. by Alex. K. Japp, 2 vols., 1891.

K.: *Letters of the Wordsworth Family*, ed. William Knight, 3 vols., 1907.

Lockhart: *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, by John Gibson Lockhart, 7 vols., 1837-8.

M.: *Memoirs of W. W.*, by Christopher Wordsworth, 2 vols., 1851.

Oxf. W.: The one-volume edition of W. W.'s Poems, ed. by T. Hutchinson, Oxford University Press.

T. P.: *Thomas Poole and his Friends*, by Mrs. Henry Sandford, 2 vols., 1888.

S.: *Letters from the Lake Poets to Daniel Stuart*, privately printed, 1889.

[?]: A word or words illegible in the manuscript.

Any editorial addition to the text is enclosed in square brackets: if doubtful the addition is preceded by a ?. Empty brackets denote a word or words lost through a defect in the condition of the manuscript.

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MS.
K(—)

1. D. W. to Jane Pollard¹

[Penrith—summer—1787]
Sunday eveng.

Has not my dear Jane accused me of having forgotten already my promise? Has she not accused me of neglect? Believe me I am not deserving of these repro[a]ches. However great may have been my dear friend's disappointment at not having heard from me, it cannot equal my distress at being prevented writing to her, for I have had the mortification of thinking one I love reproaches me with ingratitude besides that of being deprived of the pleasure of writing to her, but if you have harboured any such suspicions of me let me entreat you, my dear Jane, to banish them. Believe me I am not deserving of them. Every night since the time I [ou]ght to have wrote to you I have gone to bed with an [achi]ng heart. I have thought there is one who perhaps [at] this moment is thinking of me as having forgotten [ou]r friendship, forgotten to love her; Ah! how have these thoughts affected me, but I will proceed to lay before you my excuses, I hope they are such as will insure my pardon. Sunday was the day I fixt upon for writing to you, but I went out into the country at seven oclock in the morning and did not return till it was too late to attempt beginning. On Monday my Grandmr was in a very bad humour and I could not get out of the room for a mo[men]t, on Tuesday I had fully i[n]tended writing both to my Aunt² and you but as I had been longer in her debt I thought I ought to begin my letter to her the first, and I did not finish it till it was too late to attempt writing another, on Wednesday night I began one to you, but the shop was shut up, and I could get no inkstand but one which was quite dry.

¹ Jane Pollard (b. March 5, 1770, d. Jan. 25, 1847), the daughter of William P., a leading citizen of Halifax, where D. had lived from the time of her mother's death in 1778 till May 1787; this and the following four letters are written from the house of her grandparents, the Cooksons, who kept the chief mercer's shop in Penrith.

² Aunt: Elizabeth Threlkeld, who had taken care of D. since her mother's death. D. always speaks of her as her 'aunt', but she was in reality her mother's first cousin.

SUMMER 1787

I desired my Br John to put a¹ little water in it, and he filled it so full that it blotted all my paper and when I had finished half a sheet I found it was impossible for you to read it therefore I threw it aside; on Thursday night I began writing, but my Br Wm was sitting by me and I could not help talking with him till it was too late to finish, on Friday night *work* prevented me, and yesterday all my little preparations for Sunday—do you forgive me? or are you still inclined to accuse me of indolence? I hope you do not. I hope you say within yourself, ‘She is equally as pardonable as I was, she has felt the same uneasiness, the same fears least her friend should think she has forgotten her.’ Do, pray do forgive me and write to me at the appointed time. I might perhaps have employed an hour or two in writing to you but I have so few, so very few to pass with my Brothers that I could not leave them. You know not how happy I am in their company. I do not now want a friend who will share with me my distresses. I do not now pass half my time alone. I can bear the ill-nature of all my relations, for the affection of my Brothers consoles me in all my griefs, but how soon alas! shall I be deprived of this consolation! and how soon shall I again become melancholy, even more melancholy than before. They are just the boys I could wish them, they are so affectionate and so kind to me as makes me love them more and more every day. Wm and Christopher are very clever b[oys,] at least so they appear in the partial eyes of a sist[er.] No doubt I am partial and see virtues in them that b[y every]body else will pass unnoticed. John, (who is to be the sailor,) has a most excellent heart, he is not so bright as either William or Christopher but he has very good common sense and is very well calculated for the profession he has chosen. Richard (the oldest) I have seen, he is equally affectionate and good, but is far from being as clever as William, but I have no doubts of his succeeding in his business for he is very diligen[t] and far from being dull, he only spent a night with us. Many a time have Wm, Jn, C, and myself shed tears together, tears of the bitterest sorrow, we all of us, each day, feel more sensibly the loss we sustained when we were deprived of our parents, and each day do we receive fresh insults. You

¹ a: *miswritten* my

SUMMER 1787

will wonder of what sort; believe me of the most mortifying kind, the insults of servants, but I will give you the particulars of our distresses as far as my paper will allow, but I cannot tell you half what I wish, and I fear that when I have finished you will feel yourself almost as much in the dark as ever. I was for a whole week kept in expectation of my Brothers, who staid at school all that time after the vacation began owing to the ill-nature of my Uncle who would not send horses for them because when they wrote they did not happen to mention them, and only said when they should break up which was always before sufficient. This was the beginning of my mortifications for I felt that if they had had another home to go to, they would have been behaved to in a very different manner, and received with more chearful countenances, indeed nobody but myself expressed one wish to see them. At last however they were sent for, but not till my Brother Wm had hired a horse for himself and came over because he thought someone must be ill; the servants are every one of them so insolent to us as makes the kitchen as well as the parlour quite insupportable. James has even gone so far as to tell us that we had nobody to depend upon but my Grandfr, for that our fortunes we[re] but v[ery sma]ll, and my Brs can not even get a pair of shoes cleaned without James's telling them they require as much waiting upon as any *gentlemen*, nor can I get a thing done for myself without absolutely entreating it as a [fav]our. James happens to be a particular favorite [with] my Uncle Kit, who has taken a dislike to my Br [and] never takes any notice of any of us, so that he thinks [whi]le my Uncle behaves in this way to us he may do anything. We are found fault with every hour of the day both by the servants and my Grandfr and Grandmr, the former of whom never speaks to us but when he scolds, which is not seldom. I daresay our fortunes have been weighed thousands of times at the tea table in the kitchen and I have no doubt but they always conclude their conversations with 'they have nothing to be proud of'. Our fortunes will I fear be very small as Lord Lonsdale¹ will most

¹ Sir James Lowther (1726-1802), first Earl of Lonsdale, known, says the *D.N.B.*, as the 'bad earl', a shameless political sharper and an intolerable tyrant over his dependants and tenants. The W.s were not the only

likely only pay a very small part of his debt which is 4700 pound. My uncle Kit (who is our Guardian) having said many disrespectful things of him and having always espoused the cause of the Duke of Norfolk,¹ has incensed him so much that I fear we shall feel through life the effects of his imprudence. We shall however have sufficient to educate my Brothers. John poor fellow! says that he shall have occasion for very little, two hundred pounds will be enough to fit him out, and he should wish Wm to have the rest for his education, as he has a wish to be a Lawyer if his health will permit, and it will be very expensive. We shall have I believe about six hundred pound apiece if Lord L. does not pay. It is but very little, but it will be quite enough for my Brothers' education and after they are once put forward in the world there is little doubt of their succeeding, and for me, while they live I shall never want a friend.

Oh Jane! when they have left me I shall be quite unhappy, I shall long more ardently than ever for you my dearest, dearest friend. We have been told thousands of times that we were liars but we treat such behaviour with the contempt it deserves. [We] always finish our conversations which generally take a melancholy turn, with [w]ishing we had a father and a home. Oh! Jane, I hope it may be long ere you experience the loss of your parents, but till you feel that loss you will never know how dear to you your sisters are; till you feel that loss! do I say? I almost wish you may never feel it, for 'tis the greatest misfortune that can befall one but 'tis what in the course of nature one must expect; but I shall be making you as melancholy as

creditors from whom he withheld their due. But in his will he left instructions that all his just debts should be paid, and on his death the W.'s put in a claim for £4,825 3s. 7½d., the sum due to their father's estate on his death, plus £4,336 1s. 10½d. interest from Jan. 1784 to Oct. 1802 (=£8,961 5s. 6d.). To this was added an extra bill for Mr. Richard W.'s law charges delivered May 1794, £972 3s. 7d.; and interest on bill from May 1795 to Sept. 1802, £259 7s. 7d.; and expenses of six witnesses not included in Mr. R. W.'s bill £195. Total £10,388 6s. 8d. The debt was finally settled with the sum of £8,500, of which W.'s and D.'s share, after deduction of their share of the expenses, was £3,825. The debt was paid in instalments, the last in 1804.

¹ Charles Howard (1746-1805) eleventh Duke of Norfolk, with his large estate surrounding Greystoke Castle, was the rival landed proprietor. As a staunch whig he had wrested several parliamentary seats from the Lonsdale influence.

SUMMER 1787

myself and am distressing both you and myself with thinking of an event that I hope will not happen these many, many years, during which time I hope my dear Jane will never experience any of the mortifications to which her friend is continually subject, and that the domestick happiness which now reigns in your family may never once be interrupted.

I have read over my letter, and find it is only filled with my own concerns; pardon me my dearest girl; what is uppermost in my mind I must write.

Write pray do write on Sunday and depend upon an answer.

My love to each of your family. *Unsigned.*

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr William Pollard's, Halifax.

MS.

2. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

[Penrith—Aug. 5. or 6.—1787]

Monday evening 10 o'clock.

Have you not my dearest girl, have you not thought me unpardonable for not having wrote to you on the appointed day? Yes, I fear you have, I fear you have said, 'before, I could forgive her for neglecting to write to me on the day fixed; but a repeated offence I cannot pardon'. Ah! Jane, if this has been your resolution let me entreat you to read with patience my excuses and beg you in your next letter to tell me you forgive me. Yesterday morning I parted with the kindest and most affectionate of Brothers, I cannot paint to you my distress at their departure, I can only tell you that for a few hours I was absolutely miserable, a thousand tormenting fears rushed upon me, the approaching winter, the ill-nature of my Grandfather and Uncle Chris^r., the little probability there is of my soon again seeing my younger Brother, and the still less likelihood of my revisiting my Halifax friends, in quick succession filled my mind. Could I write to you while I was in this situation? My dear Jane's feeling heart will I am sure at once tell her, 'No.' After dinner I began a letter of which I wrote one side before Church time. As I was returning home in the afternoon two young ladies engaged me to walk with them; I was in low spirits; I thought

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a walk would perhaps put off for a while my melancholy reflections, therefore I consented; I rose early this morning, and I should certainly have employed my time in addressing you my dear Jane if I had not had some work to finish before my Grandmother's coming down stairs, it was what I had neglected doing while my Brothers were here, as when they were with me I could always employ my time much more agreeably than in mending an old shirt. She did not know that I had not finished it and if I had not done it this morning she would have found me out, today I went out a visiting and when I came home it was too late for the post. My Grandmother is now gone to bed and I am quite alone. Imagine me sitting in my bed-gown, my hair out of curl and hanging about my face, with a small candle beside me, and my whole person the picture of poverty (as it always is in a bed-gown) and you will then see your friend Dorothy. It is after eleven o'clock. I begin to find myself very sleepy and I have my Hair to curl, so I must bid my very dear friend a good night.

Tuesday evening. I have stolen a moment again to take up my pen to write to my dear Jane and I hope to be able to finish my Epistle before the post goes off, though I am sure I could not write in a dozen sheets all I have to say to her, and perhaps if I was to be able to tell her all I wish she would think I only troubled her with trifles—You know not how forlorn and dull I find myself now that my Brs are gone, neither can you imagine how I enjoyed their company when I could contrive to be alone with them which I did as often as possible. Ah! Jane if the partial affection of a Sister does not greatly magnify all their merits, they are charming boys, particularly the three youngest (William, John, and Kit.) No doubt I discern in them merits which will by every body else pass unheeded. I often say to myself 'I have the most affectionate Brothers in the world, while I possess them, while I have you my dear dear Jane to whom I will ever lay open all the secrets of my heart can I ever be entirely miserable?' But no, no one can deprive me of the sweet consolation of pouring out my sorrows into the bosom of a brother or a friend; I, (young as I am) flatter myself that Halifax contains several real friends to me, but it is indeed

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mortifying to my Brothers and me to find that amongst all those who visited at my father's house he had not one real friend; would you think it Jane? a gentleman of my father's intimate acquaintance, who is not worth less than two or three thousand a year, and who always professed himself to be the real friend of my father refused to pay a bill of seven hundred pound to his children without considerable deductions: when my Father died his affairs were in a very unsettled way and Lord Lonsdale does not owe us less than 4 thousand 7 hundred pounds of which I daresay we shall never receive a farthing, we shall however have about 600 pounds a piece, and I am sure as long as my Brothers have a farthing in their pockets I shall never want. My Br Wm goes to Cambridge in October but he will be at Penrith before his departure, he wishes very much to be a Lawyer if his health will permit, but he is troubled with violent head-aches and a pain in his side, but I hope they will leave him in a little time. You must not be surprized if you see him at Halifax in a short time, I think he will not be able to call there in his way to Cambridge as my Uncle Wm and a young gentleman who is going to the same college will accompany him. When I wrote to you last I had some faint hopes that he might have been permitted to stay with me till October. You may guess how much I was mortified and vexed at his being obliged to go away. I absolutely dislike my Uncle Kit who never speaks a pleasant word to one, and behaves to my Br Wm in a particularly ungenerous manner.

I thank you my dear Jane for your inquiries after my health, I have been perfectly well since I came to Penrith excepting for a pain in my head now and then, but I think crying was the cause of it. I hope in your next letter you will acquaint me with your perfect recovery.

I am also mu[ch] obliged to you for your l[i]t[erary] intelligence. I do not [remember] having heard of the conversations of Emily. I ha[ve] a very pretty little collection of Books from my Brothers [] which they have given me. I will give you a catalog[ue.] I have the Iliad, the Odyssey, [?] works, Fielding's works, Hayley's poems, Gil Blas (in [?], Gregory's Legacy to his Daughters, and my Brother Ric[hard] intends sending me

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Shakespeare's Plays, and the Spec[tator.] I have also Milton's Works, Dr. Goldsmith's poems, [and] other trifling things. I think I hear you say 'how will [you] have time to read all these?' I am determined to re[ad a] great deal now both in French and English. My Grandmr sits in the shop in the afternoons and by working par[ticularly] hard for one hour I think I may read the next, withou[t be]ing discovered, and I rise pretty early in a morning so [I hope] in time to have perused them all. I am at present [reading] the Iliad, and like it very much. My Br Wm read [a part] of it.

So, you have got high-heeled shoes [?I do not] think of having them yet awhile I am so little, and wish to appear as girlish as possible. I wear my hair curled about my face in light curls friz'd at the bottom and turned at the ends. How have you yours? I have tied my black hat under the chin, as it looked shabby in its former state.

I really think it is better not to have any stated time for writing one may so easily be disappointed, but always take the first opportunity we have, so I entreat you to write to me very, very soon. I will not fix the day for fear I should be disappointed but do not defer it longer than till next Monday or Tuesday. Now mind this is to be the latest, write sooner if possible.

I am obliged to conclude this ill-written scrawl immediately or I shall be too late for the post. Adieu my dearest, dearest girl. My very best love to all your family. Write soon. Can you read this?

Unsigned.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Wm Pollard's, Halifax.

MS.
K(—)

3. D. W. to Jane Pollard

[Penrith—late autumn—1787]

How much was I concerned, my dearest Jane, to hear of the bad state of health you had been in, before you wrote me your last kind and affectionate Letter, but I hope you still continue to take care of yourself, for fear of a return of your complaint. It was really at a very provoking time it happened; but I hope

LATE AUTUMN 1787

before now you are arrived at Bradford and there enjoying the company of your Friend Miss P. and your Sister Ellen. Oh! Jane that I was but of the party! or that I was but at Halifax! Do you not sometimes wish for me? I flatter myself you do. I often wish for you, I think how happy we could be together! notwithstanding the cold insensibility of my Gmr and the ill-nature of my Grandfr. Oh! Jane my dear, dear Friend that I had it in my power to ask you, how joyfully would I write the so much talked of invitation to your Papa and Mama! Our meeting, Oh Jane! would not it be charming? My heart is so full, I know not what I write; if I had a father, in his house you would have been received with a joy nothing could exceed! but it is in vain to wish! wishes will not recal him to life. Never, till I came to Penrith, did I feel the loss I sustained when I was deprived of a Father. One would imagine that a Grandmr would feel for her grandchild all the tenderness of a mother particularly when that Grandchild had no other parent, but there is so little of tenderness in her manner or of anything affectionate, that while I am in her house I cannot at all consider myself as at home, I feel like a stranger. You cannot think how gravely and silently I sit with her and my Gfr, you would scarcely know me. You are well acquainted that I was never remarkable for taciturnity, but now I sit for whole hours without saying anything excepting that I have an old shirt to mend, then, my Grandmr and I have to set our heads together and contrive the most notable way of doing it, which I daresay in the end we always hit upon, but really the contrivance itself takes up more time than the shirt is worth, our only conversation is about *work, work*, or what sort of a servant such a one's is, who are her parents, what places she lived in, why she left them, etc. etc. What my dear Jane can be more uninteresting than such conversation as this? Yet I am obliged to set upon the occasion as *notable* a face as if I was delighted with it, and that nothing could be more agreeable to me; notability is preached up to me every day, such an one is a very *sedate clever*, *notable* girl says my Grm^r. My Grm's taste and mine so ill agree that there is not one person who is a favorite with her that I do not dislike. You are well acquainted with the characters of those two amiable

LATE AUTUMN 1787

Ladies, the Miss Custs,¹ they are a mixture of ignorance, pride, affectation, self-conceit, and affected notability; I now see so many of those *useful* people, in their own imaginations, the *notables*, that I have quite an aversion to everyone that bears that character: the Miss C.s are so ill-natured too; I could bear their ignorance well enough, if they did not think so exceedingly well of themselves; for it cannot be expected that those who have not had the advantages of education can know as much as those who have. I have filled above half my paper with talking about those who are not worth my notice, and whose meanness only deserves my contempt, I will therefore, no longer vex myself with thinking of them nor you with reading about them.

I often go to Mr. Cowper's² and like Miss D. C. better than ever. I wish my Uncle³ and she would but get married, I think at first I should not reap any benefit from it, any further than that I must certainly pay them a visit, sometime, but as long as my Gmr lives I must stay with her, and she is really as likely for life as myself, at present. I am now writing by that Uncle whom I so much love, he is a friend to whom (next to my Aunt) I owe the greatest obligations, every day gives me new proofs of his affection and every day I like him better than I did before. I am now with him two hours every morning, from nine till eleven. I then read and write French and learn Arithmetic,—when I am a good Arithmetician I am to learn Geography. I sit in his room where we have a fire. I am now writing besides him, he knows I am often pinched for time when I write, so he told me I might do that instead of my French.

I ought, my dear Jane to have wrote to you long since, and I fear you have long been angry with me, on account of my silence. I had my Br Wm with me for three weeks, I was very busy during his stay, preparing his cloaths for Cambridge, so that I had very little leisure, and what I had, you may be sure I wished to spend with him. Since his departure I have often fixed a time for writing but something has always happen'd to prevent me; you mistook my meaning when I told you, 'I

¹ D.'s uncle Kit married Charlotte Cust on Aug. 27, 1788.

² The Rev. John Cowper, rector of Penrith.

³ The Rev. William Cookson, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

LATE AUTUMN 1787

thought you might have found time to write me a few lines', I am very far from supposing you think it a task to write to me; the length of your letters is a proof to the contrary; by saying what I did I meant (though I might not perhaps express myself very clearly) that tho' you could not at one time find leisure to write me a Letter, yet you might perhaps at several different times, as I always do when I write to you.

You ask me if I am likely to visit Mrs. Robinson.¹ I imagined she would have lived at Appleby which is only sixteen miles from Penrith, it would then have been very easy to have gone and paid her a visit of two or three weeks as there is a coach goes every day from P. to A., but she has settled at York, she has given me a very pressing invitation to go there, which sometime I hope to accept, tho' I shall not think of it till I have visited Halifax.

I have heard from my Br Wm since his arrival at Cambridge, he spent three or four days at York, upon the road.

They have sent me word from Whitehaven that they shall fully expect me at Christmas, John and Kit will be there, but I must not go, poor Lads I shall not see them [? till] next summer, and John will very likely be called off to India in spring; if so, to be sure he will spend a little time here, before his going.

Mr. Griffith² when he was at Penrith, would gladly have taken me with him to Newcastle. Need I tell you how I should have been delighted to have accompanied him? I should then have seen my dear Aunt—my best friend. I am obliged to bid my dear Jane adieu as I have to write to m[y] Br Wm Miss Elliott and Miss Holden.

Do write to me very soon, tell me you forgive my long silence, and be very particular in your accounts of Bradford if you are there. My love to Miss P. and your Sisters.

D. Wordsworth

Address: Miss Jane Pollard (apparently not sent through the P.O.)

¹ Extract from Register of Barton Parish Church:

'1787: April 20. Hugh Robinson Esq. of Appleby, Widower, and Capt'n of H.M.'s Navy, and Miss Mary Myers of this parish were married.'

Mary Myers was the only daughter of D. W.'s Aunt, Anne Myers. For the connexions between the families of Robinson, Myers, and W. v. Table, p. 564-5.

² Mr. Griffith, v. Table, p. 567.

MS.
K(—)

4. D. W. to Jane Pollard

[Penrith] Friday Deer 17th [1787]

I am in daily expectation of a Letter from you, my dear Jane, in answer to my last. Perhaps you will think me very unreasonable, as I was so long in writing to you, but I hope you do not deem my offence unpardonable, but that I shall receive a long letter from you either by Mr. Threlkeld¹ or sooner; you can have no idea of the pleasure I promise myself in again seeing a Halifax friend, to enquire about you all, Oh Jane, Jane, that I could but see you! How happy, how very happy we should be! I really think that for an hour after our meeting, there would nothing pass betwixt us, but tears of joy, fits of laughter and unconnected exclamations, such as 'Oh Jane!' 'Oh Dolly!'. It is now seven months since we parted, what a long time! we have never been separated so long for these nine years. I shall soon have been here a year, and in two years more I am determined *I will* come to Halifax, if I cannot sooner, but I hope my Uncle Wm is now in the road to preferment, if I do not flatter myself without having any right to do so, he will soon be married, I must certainly in a little time go to see him, and then I shall visit Halifax. I assure you I am a very skilful architect, I have so many different plans for building one Castle, so many contrivances! Do you ever build Castles?

When I last wrote I forgot to thank you for those verses you were so kind as to transcribe for me. My Br Wm was here at the time I got your Letter, I told him that you had recommended the book² to me, he had read it and admired many of the pieces very much; and promised to get it me at the book-club, which he did. I was very much pleased with them indeed, the one which you mentioned to me is I think very comical, I mean the Address to a Louse; there is one, to a mountain daisy which is very pretty.

I daresay *you* look forward with pleasure to the approaching

¹ William T., brother of Elizabeth T., D.'s 'Aunt'. His daughter, Elizabeth or Bessy (v. Letters 6, 7, &c.), was one of D.'s Halifax friends.

² *Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect*, by Robert Burns, Kilmarnock, 1786.

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season, I am sorry to say *I* cannot; believe me, my dear Jane, I wish you many merry evenings and agreeable dances; I shall often think of you and flatter myself that on Christmas-day which is (you know) my birth-day you will cast a melancholy thought upon your friend Dorothy. Do write to me very soon, (tho' indeed you will perhaps expect a letter from me in answer to your next) so to insure a Christmas Letter, with an account of all your adventures. I will write immediately upon the receipt of it.

For my part I can tell you nothing new, for everything here goes on in the same way, the assemblies are indeed begun, but they are no amusement for me, there was one on Wednesday evening where there were a number of Ladies but alas! only six Gentlemen, so two Ladies are obliged to dance together.

I understand the players are at Halifax, have you ever been? is there any talk of building a new house? Miss Molly Waterhouse, my Uncle tells me, is come home, he thinks her very pretty, what do you think of her? You may be sure I should be very particular in my inquiries about all the Halifax ladies, he tells me that in his room he found Locke upon the Human Understanding, Euclid, and several other such books, all of which had Miss Waterhouse's name in, so she is, you see, quite a Learned Lady.

It is a very fine morning, most likely you are taking a walk up the Bank or in Mr. Caygill's walk, as for me, I never go out but on a Sunday.

If I get a Letter from you before Mr. T comes I will answer it by him. Adieu, my dear dear Girl, believe me your sincere Friend
D. Wordsworth

Friday morn eleven oclock Decr 17th

Does your health still continue better? be very particular in telling me.

I thank you from my heart my dear Jane, for your last affecte and kind Letter which I received on Thursday. I am rejoiced to hear of your present happiness, and will write to you very soon, if I had time I would destroy this Letter and scribble another, but as I have not you will excuse me. Perhaps they

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may have an opportunity of sending this to Bradford by the Diligence or some other way ; if not it will keep till your return. Now do write soon, you may depend upon a Letter from me, while you are at Bradford. My love to Ellen and Miss P. Adieu my ever dear Jane. D. Wordsworth.

Sunday night Deer 16th [? 19th]

Mr. Threlkeld is now here, he tells me your sister [] is q[ui]te recruited with her Buxton J[ourney].

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax (apparently not sent through the P.O. but presumably conveyed by Mr. Threlkeld).

MS.
K(—)

5. *D. W. to Jane Pollard*

[Penrith—January—1788]

I had begun to be very uneasy my dear Jane, on account of your long, long silence. I could not for a moment think you had forgotten me, no, Jane, I hope that will never be and that you will remember with affection your Friend Dorothy, but I feared that you had put off writing to me from day to day till at last you knew not how to begin, you seem to fear least I should be angry with you, angry! my dear Jane, how is that possible when you can so well account for your silence; I pity you from my heart; but hope in the next six weeks you will let me have twice the number of Letters you would have done, if you had not been so long unable to write. Oh Jane! how dearly do I love you! no words can paint my affection and friendship for you my dear Girl. When shall we meet! sometimes I am in despair and think that happy time will never arrive, at others I am all hope, but despair, alas! frequently gets the better of me.

I daresay you would be much surprized to hear of the death of my grandfather,¹ at first it was a great shock to us all, the suddenness of it was very terrifying, but I am now quite thankful that he did not linger any longer, for, poor man! he has for these two years been a burthen to himself and friends. We still

¹ *Penrith Registers*: 'Dec. 22. 1787—Mr Cookson, mercer, aged 76. buried.'

continue in the same house, and I believe, unless my Uncle Kit marries, we shall continue here, but no other direction is necessary than to me in Penrith, I am sufficiently known in this little petty place.

I am in hopes that I may visit my Cousin (Mrs. Robinson) at York next October; but Oh! Jane I would give any thing to go to Halifax instead, to that dear place which I shall ever consider as my home. I would not have you mention my going to Y. as a certainty for I am very doubtful whether I shall go or not; only we have it in agitation, and Mrs. R. has given me many very pressing invitations.

Poor Miss Priestley! She is much to be pitied, the loss of a mother can only be made up by such a friend as my dear Aunt, but still she has a father, and while he lives, how much less pitiable is her situation than ours! we have no father to protect, no mother to guide us. Oh Jane you cannot sufficiently prize your kind parents. My brother John has set sail for Barbadoes. I hope, poor Lad! that he will be successful and happy, he is much delighted with the profession he has chosen. How we are squandered abroad! I often wish, selfish as it may appear to you, that you my dear Jane were my Sister, I think how happy we should be! our fortunes would be but very small, but sufficient for us to live comfortably and on our Brothers we would depend for every thing. I am now alas! talking of the impossible, so I will drop the subject.

I am happy to hear you spent your time so agreeably, when at Bradford, give my love to Miss Priestley when you write. I hope that her health is by this time quite re-established.

I have sent you a lock of my hair, it will serve to remind you of poor Dolly when ever you see it. You cannot think how I like the idea of being called poor Dorothy or Dolly, by my Halifax friends, I could cry whenever I think of it; strange as this may appear it is very natural for those, who fancy they deserve pity to be affected when they know they meet with it.

You will receive a thimble either by Mr. Nicholson or before, which my dear Love I hope you will accept. I wish I could send you something better or of greater value, but, trifling as it is, whenever you put it on, I hope it will serve to remind you of my

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affection for you. I have got the handkerchief in my pocket that you made, and marked for me, I have just this moment pulled it out to admire the letters. Oh! Jane, it is a valuable handkerchief.

I have taken two very shabby pieces of paper but I have not any more by me, to you however I need make [no] apology either for the writing or materials which [are] both shocking.

Remember me affectionately [t]o all your sisters particularly E. and H. I fear I must conclude very soon as my Gm^r will wonder what I can have to say to you all, as I have been writing all the day excepting when I was at Church, she has no idea one can have anything to write about, but that one is well, and such stuff as that. I could write two or three sheets and yet when I sate down I knew nothing that I had to tell you but that I love you and ever shall, on this subject I could dwell for ever. Now my dear Jane I shall depend upon a Letter from you in a fortnight or sooner. I would have wrote a much longer, if my time would permit, but I fear my Gm^r will think me long. Now do write soon my dearest, dearest, girl, do not defer it longer than a fortnight. You see how punctual I have been, you wrote to me last Sunday but one.

Adieu my love, do not forget to send me a piece of hair.

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard.

MS.
K(—)

6. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Norwich Decr 6th [1788]
Sunday Eveng.

My dear Jane

Neither excuses nor apologies would make you pardon my neglect; I am conscious of this; I will not therefore attempt to vindicate my behaviour; I am convinced you would endeavour to think as well of me as possible so I only depend upon your former affection and kindness; if you knew how much I repent of my conduct, how sincerely I have resolved never more to be guilty of the like offence, and how much pain the idea of having offended so near and dear a friend has given me; you

would not then hesitate a moment in granting your forgiveness ; I will however quit this subject which is a very painful one to me and must to you be very disagreeable ; and will endeavour to entertain you with an account of the changes in my situation which have taken place since I last wrote ; I know it will give you pleasure to hear of my happiness even if you *cannot* love me as well as you used to do ; I sometimes think you will never forgive me, but in general I depend so much upon your goodness that I flatter myself it is impossible.

I believe nearly half a year has elapsed since I last wrote to you ; since that time great and unexpected changes have taken place ; I have now nothing left to wish for on my own account ; every day gives me fresh proofs of my Uncle and Aunt's goodness ;¹ I am sure there is not a better man in the world than my Uncle, nor a more amiable woman than my Aunt. You know how partial I always was to a country life but I almost despaired of ever enjoying it ; but to live in the country and with such kind friends ! have I not every reason to be thankful ? My happiness was very unexpected for I knew nothing of it ten days before ; when my Uncle told me I was almost mad with joy ; I cried and laughed alternately ; it was in a walk with him and Miss D. that the secret was communicated to me ; you may be sure the short time I had to stay at Penrith was very busily employed in preparing my cloaths etc. After the wedding was over we breakfasted at Mrs. Cowper's, and then set off on our journey ; we got to Newcastle the next day, where we spent a fortnight very agreeably ; and had not the prospect of finding a comfortable and happy home presented itself continually to my view I should have left that place with very great regret. Nothing happen'd worth relating on our journey between Newcastle and Cambridge, where the buildings, added to the pleasure of seeing my Brother very well and in excellent spirits delighted me exceedingly ; I could scarcely help imagining myself in a different country when I was walking in the college courts and groves ; it looked so odd to see smart powdered heads

¹ *Penrith Registers*: '1788—October 17—The Revd Wm Cookson, aged 30, and Dorothy Cowper, aged 30, were married in the presence of Wm Monkhouse and D. Wordsworth.'

with black caps like helmets, only that they have a square piece of wood at the top, and gowns, something like those that clergymen wear; but, I assure you, (though a description of the dress may sound very strange) it is exceedingly becoming. We only staid a day at Cambridge, as you may be sure we were anxious to see our destined abode. At our entrance we saw Norwich to great advantage, as they were celebrating the revolution and the discovery of the gunpowder plot; the town was very well illuminated and the illuminations and ringing of bells would almost have given us spirits if we had wanted them. We had intended going to Fornsett the next day, but were disappointed, however the day after our curiosity was gratified; Fornsett is a little village entirely inhabited by farmers, who seem very decent kind of people; my Uncle's house is now very comfortable and may be made an excellent one; the gardens will be charming. I intend to be a great gardener and promise myself much pleasure in taking care of the poultry of which we are to have great abundance. My Uncle has changed his plan since I last wrote to Halifax, it was then his intention to make the alterations intended at Fornsett this winter; but he now thinks of going there immediately and we hope to get there on Friday. Since we came to Norwich we have been very busy making the necessary preparations for beginning house-keeping such as making linnen, going a shopping, etc., etc. We have sketched out a plan of the manner in which we are to spend our time, which I will give you that you may have some idea of my situation. We are to have prayers at nine oclock (you will observe it is *winter*) after breakfast is over we are to read, write, and I am to improve myself in French till twelve oclock, when we are to walk or visit our sick and poor neighbours till three, which is our dining hour; and after tea my Uncle will sit with us and either read to us or not as he and we find ourselves inclined. You can have no idea how much I please myself with the idea of seeing my dear Aunt in Spring. My Uncle and Aunt fully expect her. On my journey I passed within thirty miles of Halifax, and believe me my dear Jane it was with *very, very* great regret, that I went so near that place without visiting it.

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Give my kindest love to all your Sisters particularly Ellen and Harriot and make my best respects to your Father and Mother.

I received my Aunt's letter today, when you see her or any of the family pray give my love to them and tell them I will write when I get to Forncett.

My aunt tells me that E. Threlkeld is expected from Bury. When you write (for I hope you will let me hear from you) pray tell me what you think of her; I hope she will be much improved. Does she correspond with Harriot? I am sorry to hear that Mary is so delicate. Poor Bessy, has I am afraid been very ill, but from what my aunt says I hope she is getting better. How did you like Rochdale? I suppose y[o]u were staying at Mr. []

Give my love to Miss Priestley of Bradford, ha[ve you] seen her lately?

I enjoy the idea of spend[ing] Christmas in the country. We have had many consu[ltations] in what manner we are to keep my Birth-day but we have at last agree[d] upon roast-beef and plumb-pudd[ing] [as the] best Christmas-day din[ner]. It is now nearly a year s[ince my] Gf^r died; you know the manner in which I spent last [Christmas]. how different is my present situation! the only comfort[s I] had were in seeing Mr. G[ri]ffith and in knowing that my frie[nds in] Halifax rem[em]bered me, but while I had these [] miserable.

I dare not ask you to write soon; I will only tell you that I shall expect your letter with the greatest impatience; and I promise you I will answer it by the very next post. Adieu, my very dear Friend believe me, notwithstanding my strange behaviour I have always remembered you and ever shall with unalterable affection.

D. Wordsworth

Direct to me at my uncle's, Forncett, near Long Stratton—Norfolk. I am afraid you can scarcely read this scrawl.

Monday morn[ing]. It is a charming morning and my Aunt and I are going a shopping.

I have not find given you any account of Norwich. It is an immensely large place; but the streets in general are very

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ugly, and they are all so ill-paved and dirty as almost entirely to take away the pleasure of walking; we have been introduced to some of the genteel families in the place but have visited very little on account of business. Their visiting is entirely in the rout stile; and they are so ridiculous as to send invitations three weeks or a month beforehand. We had an invitation came on the 26th of November for the 18th of December to tea and cards, can any thing be more absurd? I cannot help thinking how my Gmr and the old ladies at Penrith would stare at this. They exclaim against the idleness and folly of the age; and say it is impossible to secure company unless you send two or three days before you intend to receive them. Adieu my dear girl.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Wm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

7. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

[Fornsett] Sunday Deer 28th. [1788]

I thank you again and again my dearest Jane, for your kind and welcome letter, which I esteem the greatest proof possible of your affection and friendship for me; what must have been your opinion of me during my long, long silence! oh Jane can you really forgive me! can you still love me as you used to do! after I have given you so much uneasiness. Accept my warmest thanks for this kindness; my sincerest assurances that I will never again be guilty of such neglect.

We are now happily settled at Fornsett, and upon a nearer view my prospects appear even more delightful than they did upon a more distant one; we have not however yet been able to put in practice the regular plan of spending our time which I mentioned to you, as we have had a good deal of linnen to make, and the house to put into order; however, we have walked every morning but the two last when it snowed so violently it was impossible to get out. You would laugh to see us wading through the snow in our half boots and spatter-dashes; we never go out without them for we find them not only very *comfortable* but *necessary*. Oh! my dear friend if you

were with me how happy we should be! I often wish for you to walk with me in the garden. My room is one of the pleasantest in the house. I wish you were here to share it with me; some of the views are beautiful and I frequently wish that you were with me when I am admiring them:—but all this is very foolish as I know it is impossible and as I have so great reason to be contented it is wrong, yet still it cannot be very blamable to wish to see one's friends and that they could be partakers of one's pleasures.

I thought of you all on Christmas-day; after dinner I imagined you sitting round the table, and had even the vanity to suppose that you might be drinking my health; I saw you in the evening surrounding Mrs. P.'s chearful fire; and when I thought of this I longed to make one of the happy circle. With us, nothing particular happen'd on that day; we went in the morning to one of my Uncle's churches which is only a step or two from the house, and in the afternoon to the other which is about a mile from us; we drank tea with Mrs. Dix, the lady of whom I spoke to you as being the only neighbour we had within two miles of us. She appears to be a sensible woman, but has a good many of the particularities, and some of the bad qualities ascribed to old maids; her appearance is rather remarkable as she always wears long ruffles and a common stuff gown; she is rich, but lives alone and in a very plain manner, I cannot say whether it proceeds from covetousness or not as I do not know what use she may make of her money, she is likely however to be a very useful neighbour and I think in general she has a very good character, her worst fault is censoriousness, of which she seems to be guilty.

We met with Dr. Enfield one afternoon upon a visit at Norwich. He is, I think a very agreeable man; if we had staid longer in N— (but when we saw him we were just going to quit the place) we should have visited at his house. I should have liked much to have seen Miss Enfield as I recollect meeting her at Mrs. Rhodes's.

You will think I run strangely from one subject to another; I remembered something that Mrs. Dix said about Dr. Enfield made me mention him to you—she remarked, on my Uncle's

saying what a pleasant man he was, that he was a *true presbyterian* 'that he would lick the feet of his benefactors' and to prove what she said, she told us a story of which I could make out nothing at all but that her notions of religion were prejudiced and illiberal.

I would not have troubled you with so long a description of Mrs. Dix, if I did not think you would wish to be acquainted with her character as she is the only near neighbour we have—now let me turn to your letter.

I am very sorry to hear that Miss Priestley has been so poorly—pray give my kindest love to her—what was her complaint? As you do not mention your own health I flatter myself you are well. I am impatient to hear something more of E. Threlkeld. I hope you will find great improvements in her; tell me everything concerning her. Your weekly meetings must be delightful ones, of how many of each family are they composed? I assure you I think they must be greatly preferable to *routs* which are of all things in the world the most disagreeable. I have not read the novel you mention but I will endeavour to get it in the Norwich Library, at present we are reading Hume's history of England.

I hope Mr. and Mrs. Pollard and your Sisters will accept my thanks for their kind remembrance of me, be so good as to make my best respects to each of them.

Did I ever tell you that my brother John is gone to Jamaica? and on his return that he is going to the East Indies? we expect him again about March or April. I think I have not told you of one of my amusements, it is feeding the Robin redbreasts; there are at present two in the room which are gone to rest; you may imagine how tame they are when I tell you that they hop about the room where we sit, without shewing the least appearance of fear.

We have, I think, visited most of the poor people in the parish—my Uncle will I am sure do a great deal of good in the place.

Give my love to E. T.—I will write to her very soon.

I cannot conclude without again thanking you for your goodness to me; my dear Jane I will for ever love you; this

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last flattering proof of your regard I shall never forget. Adieu
my dear Friend Your affecte

D. Wordsworth

Do write soon. I fear this scrawl is scarcely legible. I have
got into a shocking way of scrawling.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Wm Pollard's, Halifax,
Yorkshire.

MS.

8. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

[Fornett] Monday Evening Jan'y 25th [1790]

Your goodness quite overpowers me, my very dear Friend.
Oh Jane! how kind you are; to remember one with such tender
affection, who could scarcely have reproached you had you
cast her off as utterly unworthy of your regard—believe me,
no decrease of friendship has occasioned my apparently un-
friendly behaviour. I have no excuse to offer but that poor one,
(indolence) which being the best I could possibly have, your
love for me suggested to you. I will not pain you or myself
by a review of my conduct. I trust from the kindness you have
shown me, that I shall be entirely forgiven by you.

I rejoice with you on the prospect of your dear Father's
perfect recovery. I did indeed sympathize with you in your
distress for I too well know how irreparable is the loss of an
indulgent parent. I hope your next Letter will confirm what you
told me in your last—and that I shall hear of his continued
amendment. I think I have a great deal to tell you, it is so
long since I wrote to you. I say to myself where shall I set
forward? but first I will answer your Letter and begin with
what most nearly concerns me; my Aunt's displeasure. You
are indeed very kind to impute my silence to the true cause.
I fear she is very angry with me as indeed she has great reason;
but I will not enter into particulars as I should only swell my
letter to no purpose. You know my heart too well to doubt my
gratitude to her and affection for her, and I hope I know her
too well to be mistaken when I say I trust that '*she does not
think that all my professions*' of regard '*were insincere*'; indeed

Jane, I am much hurt with what you tell me my Cousins say of me; to assert that my assurances of affection were all insincere, I confess I think unfriendly and more unkind than my behaviour, upon a candid consideration has merited. If they had said that I now seemed to have lost that affection for them which I formerly possess'd; for that I would have found many excuses, but for what they have now said I can only 'discover one; which is this, that the assertion was made without due consideration; I, however, heartily forgive them when I consider how much more attention and kindness they had a right to expect from me than I have lately shewn them. I have written to my Aunt but have taken no notice of that part of your letter.

I have every reason, my dear Jane, to be satisfied with my present situation; I have two kind Friends with whom I live in that retirement, which before I enjoyed I knew I should relish. I have leisure to read, work, walk and do what I please, in short I have every cause to be contented and happy. We look forward to the coming of our little relation with anxious expectation; I hope to be a good nurse, though by the bye I must make considerable improvement before I arrive at any degree of excellence; I verily believe that I never took an infant in my arms that did not the moment it was there by its cries beg to be removed. My Brother John, I imagine sailed for India on Saturday or Sunday in the Earl of Abergavenny: he wrote to me the other day while on board her in excellent spirits. William is at Cambridge, Richard in London, and Kitt at Hawkshead; how we are squandered abroad.¹

Perhaps you know that we are engaged in a Law suit with Lord Lonsdale, which is not likely to end in less than three years, it may be much longer. I cannot say I feel myself very anxious as to the issue of it; I have entirely reconciled myself to whatever may be my lot, for if we have sufficient to provide for my Brothers on them I know I may depend; and I have good Friends who will do every thing for me in the intermediate space.

Did I ever tell you that I had got a little school; indeed when

¹ Squandered abroad: cf. *Merchant of Venice*, I. iii. 22.

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I recollect, it is not possible that I should have told you, as I have only kept it six months. I will give you my plan. I have nine scholars, I had at first ten but I dismissed one and during the winter I did not think it prudent to supply her place. Our hours in winter are, on Sunday mornings from nine till church time, at noon from half past one till three: and at night from four till half past 5: those who live near us come to me every Wednesday and Saturday evening.

I only instruct them in reading and spelling and they get off prayers hymns and catechisms. I have one very bright scholar, some very tolerable, and one or two very bad. We distribute rewards such as books, caps, aprons etc. We intend in a little time to have a school upon a more extensive plan—so that this of mine is only a temporary thing. We are to have a mistress who is to teach them spinning, knitting etc. in the week days, and I am to assist her on Sundays, when they are to be taught to read.

Mr. Wilberforce¹ has been with us rather better than a month, tell your Father I hope he will give him his vote at the next general election. I believe him to be one of the best of men.

He allows me ten guineas a year to distribute in what manner I think best to the poor, it is a very nice sum by which I [am] enabled to do more good than perhaps might ever have been in my power—remember all this is between ourselves, therefore don't mention it.

I am very sorry to hear that E. T[hrelkeld] is so poorly. Give my kind love to her.

I shall look forward to the time of my receiv[ing] another letter from you, with anxious expectation but I trust you will be as good as your word. You do not [mention] your own health, therefore I hope it is perfectly reesta[blished.] pray tell me what has been your complaint and if you are now perfectly well. Let me have a long letter from you and assure me you entirely forgive me; Oh Jane you are very dear to me. I love you if possible better than ever since your last arrived. I would not leave a scrap of paper unfill'd if I had time to say more,

¹ William Wilberforce (1759–1833), the famous politician and philanthropist, had been a fellow student with D.'s uncle William at St. John's College, Cambridge. He was at this time M.P. for Yorkshire.

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but I every moment expect to have my letter call'd for—adieu my dear girl.

D. Wordsworth

My kind remembrance to each of your Family. Do write soon—can you read this scrawl?

Tuesday Morning. I find I have a little more time, therefore I will not omit telling you that I have seized the first opportunity I have had of getting a letter conveyed to the office. Be very particular in telling me how you go on. What are you reading? Do you walk much? are your Sisters all well. Do you often see our Family? what does my Aunt say of me? in short tell me every thing—and continue to love me—my dearest Jane.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Willm Pollards, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

9. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

Fornsett April 30¹ 1790.

My dearest Jane,

To convince you of my sincerity in desiring that I may frequently hear from you, I sit down to answer your last letter on the very day on which I have received it, and I answer it with unfeigned satisfaction. A letter from you, my dear friend will always be a comfort to me, and your last was particularly acceptable, as I confess it relieved me from some degree of anxiety.

Your way of accounting for my apparent absence of mind diverted me exceedingly. I will set forward with assuring you that my heart is perfectly disengaged and then endeavour to shew you how very improbable it is that Mr. W. would think of me. As to the first point I can only say that no man I have seen has appeared to regard me with any degree of partiality; nor has any one gained my affections, and of this you need not doubt, that your request that I would make a confidante of you would have been very unnecessary had there been any

¹ Probably a slip for March 30.

foundation for your suspicions; believe me, *if ever I do form* an attachment it shall not long be a secret from you. And as to the second point, Mr. W. would, were he ever to marry, look for a Lady possessed of many more accomplishments than I can boast, and besides he is as unlikely a man ever to marry at all as any I know. When I tell you that I have not seen my dear Br Wm since my Aunt was with us, and that he came alone, this last supposition will have no weight with you. But perhaps all the time I am endeavouring to clear myself, you are laughing at me for treating as a serious matter what might be merely said in jest; however as I was not certain of this I was determined to give you such an answer as might relieve all your doubts—and now Mrs. Jane to return to your own letter may I not retort upon you? I think you can not with nineteen years experience have avoided learning, that the daughter of an Uncle is not *Niece* to that Uncle's *Niece*, but *Cousin*. And throughout the whole of your letter you speak of Mary as my *Niece*. Now, as I said before, you must upon consideration know that she does not stand in that degree of relationship to me; from what then could this error proceed but absence of mind? and how shall I account for this absence so naturally as in your own way? in short I see *you* want a confidante, and that all your sly raillery was designed to create a suspicion in me; that it was a picture of your own case which you applied to mine; then to be sure I must ask a few pretty questions, and you at last, modestly blushing must be obliged to confess the truth.

You inquire after my health (which by the bye is as good as I could desire) without answering my inquiries after your own; pray tell me how you are now, and what was your complaint last spring. I rejoice to hear that your father's health continues to improve. Make my best respects to him and your mother. Your inquiries about my school I cannot answer so satisfactorily as I could wish; as my scholars have had a holiday ever since little Mary's birth, on account of the small pox which have never been out of the parish; we are very fearful she should catch them and we think my little girls likely to bring them. I hope however that I shall in a week or two be able to have

them again. Whenever I see any of them I am asked the flattering question, 'Pray Miss when shall we come to school again?' One of them who came to me six months on Sundays and a very few times a part of that time in the week days is able to read exceedingly well in the testament, can repeat the catechism and a part of an explanation of it; five or six hymns, the Lord's Prayer, the creed and a morning and evening prayer; she can read the church prayer book as well as I could desire and did not know a letter when she came to me—the rest do not do quite so well but however I have no reason to complain.

Our affair with Lord Lonsdale goes on as usual which, I suppose, is very slowly, we probably shall not see it concluded in less than three years.

My Brothers I hope are all well. I long to have an opportunity of introducing you to my dear Wm. I am very anxious about him just now, as he will shortly have to provide for himself: next year he takes his degree; when he will go into orders I do not know, nor how he will employ himself, he must, when he is three and twenty either go into orders or take pupils; he will be twenty in April. I do not know whether I mentioned my Br Kitt to you in my last, he intends to go to Cambridge. My Uncle C. tells me he is a most amiable youth; and I am told that, for his years he is a most excellent scholar; and from my own experience I know that he has the best of tempers. His person was I think rather handsome; at least, there is some thing very interesting in his countenance—were he not a very modest gentleman I should have hopes of his paying my Cousins E. and M. a visit at Ulverston, as Hawkshead is only eight miles from that place. I will however use all my efforts in order to persuade him. You ask after our dear little Mary. I think she is the sweetest and most entertaining child of her age I ever saw, she never cries but when she is washed and dressed; a most charming concert we shall have presently, I am writing in the nursery and the terrible operation of dressing is going to commence. I think her like what Sophia Ralph was when about her age. My aunt suckles her but I daresay she will wean her very soon. Our ac[quain]tances dont any of them

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except Mrs. Dix live within two miles of us, at that distance there are several pleasant families, particula[rly the] Burroughses. Mrs. B. is a most elegant beautiful and sensi[ble woman,] but unhappily her mind is frequently deranged; she has two daughters, who are accomplished and agreeable girls, and a son who is a very pleasant young man, here I see you draw up'and smile but however you have no reason. We have a very respectable and worthy man who lives in the adjoining parish who makes an excellent use of a large fortune; and a very smart little good-tempered fellow his curate—here too you look significant.

We visit two families at the distance of 5 miles; they are bo[th] very agreeable but my dearest Jane how much I wish that *you* lived within two miles of us! for I cannot say I have any intimate acquaintances. Miss Burroughs and I are ve[r]y happy when we meet; but still we are not upon very intimate terms nor I think ever shall be, they are, however, very pleasant, good-tempered, unaffected girls. You ask me what I am reading, it is a question I asked you in one of my former letters, but you have not answered it. I cannot say I have read a great deal lately, as we have been busy making a second set of cloaths for Mary. I am at present reading Pope's works, and a little treatise on Re-generation; which with Mrs. Trimmer's *Oeconomy of Charity*,¹ Mr. Wilberforce gave me. I am going to read the New Testament with Doddridge's exposition.²

Amongst the news of the town, you never tell me that any of your sisters are going to be married, pray is it the case? I fear, however, I am asking an unfair question.

My dear Uncle and Aunt are as kind to me as ever, and in

¹ Mrs. Sarah Trimmer (1741–1815), a voluminous writer on the education of children, and of the poor. Her *Oeconomy of Charity* (1786) was the result of an interview with Queen Charlotte on starting Sunday Schools at Windsor. The book deals mainly with the promotion and management of Sunday Schools, but adds 'some desultory hints towards improving the condition of the poor by making them more generally the subject of private benevolence, and by forming committees and associations for their relief'.

² Philip Doddridge, D.D. (1702–57), a Nonconformist preacher and writer of great influence. His most important work was *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (1745), which was planned by Dr. Watts. Wilberforce attributed his conversion to reading Doddridge. The *Family Expositor* is a didactic commentary on the New Testament.

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their company and little Mary's I am perfectly happy. I tell you this because I know it will give you pleasure. When, I wonder, my dear Friend shall you and I meet? Whenever I leave Forncett for either a shorter or a longer time, if I am my own mistress I will pay Halifax a visit, and how happy my dear Girl will our meeting be!

I shall wri[te] to my Aunt in a few days—give my love to her and her family and tell her so. Remember me affectionately to your sisters and to E. and M. Threlkeld whom I desire to give my kind love to Peggy Taylor with Compts to her sister—now I hope, my dear Jane, you will let me hear from you soon, and believe me more than ever

Your Friend
Dorothy Wordsworth

The seal you showed so much sagacity in your conjectures about was given me by a Penrith F[rien]d Mary Hutchinson. You will be surprized that I did not receive your Letter sooner, it was sent by mistake to Wisbech. I wish I had room to write more. I cannot however omit telling you that I am a most excellent nurse and that little Mary is quite delighted with my *singing*. You will wonder at her taste, adieu my dear Friend. Write soon.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Willm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

M(—) G(—) K(—)

10. W. W. to D. W.

Sept. 6, 1790, Keswill (a small village on the lake of Constance)

My dear Sister,

My last letter was addressed to you from St. Valier and the Grande Chartreuse. I have, since that period, gone over a very considerable tract of country, and I will give you a sketch of my route as far as relates to mentioning the places where I have been, after I have assured you that I am in excellent health and spirits, and have had no reason to complain of the contrary

during our¹ whole tour. My spirits have been kept in a perpetual hurry of delight by the almost uninterrupted succession of sublime and beautiful objects which have passed before my eyes during the course of the last month, and you will be surprized when I assure you that our united expenses since we quitted Calais, which was on the evening of the 14th of July, have not amounted to more than twelve pounds. Never was there a more excellent school for frugality than that in which we are receiving instructions at present. I am half afraid of getting a slight touch of avarice from it. It is the end of travelling by communicating ideas to enlarge the mind; God forbid that I should stamp upon mine the strongest proof of a contracted spirit.

But I will resume the intent of this letter by endeavouring to give you some idea of our route. It will be utterly impossible for me to dwell upon particular scenes, as my paper would be exhausted before I had done with the journey of two or three days. On quitting the Grande Chartreuse, where we remained two days, contemplating, with increased pleasure, its wonderful scenery, we passed through Savoy to Geneva; thence, along the Pays de Vaud side of the lake, to Villeneuve, a small town seated at its head. The lower part of the lake did not afford us a pleasure equal to what might have been expected from its celebrity; this owing partly to its width, and partly to the weather, which was one of those hot gleamy days in which all distant objects are veiled in a species of bright obscurity. But the higher part of the lake made us ample amends: 't is true we had the same disagreeable weather, but the banks of the water are infinitely more picturesque, and, as it is much narrower, the landscape suffered proportionally less from that pale steam which before almost entirely hid the opposite shore. From Villeneuve we proceeded up the Rhone to Martigny, where we left our bundles, and struck over the mountains to Chamouny, to visit the glaciers of Savoy. You

¹ Our whole tour: W.'s companion was Robert Jones, a fellow undergraduate, to whom afterwards he dedicated his *Descriptive Sketches* (1793) of this tour. Jones was a lifelong friend of W.'s, and often visited him in later years.

have undoubtedly heard of these celebrated scenes, but if you have not read of them, any description which I have here room to give you must be altogether inadequate.

After passing two days in the environs of Chamouny, we returned to Martigny, and pursued our route up the Valais, along the Rhone, to Brig. At Brig we quitted the Valais, and passed the Alps at the Simplon, in order to visit part of Italy. The impressions of three hours of our walk among the Alps will never be effaced. From Duomo d'Ossola, a town of Italy which lay in our route, we proceeded to the lake of Locarno, to visit the Boromean Islands there, and thence to Como. A more charming path was scarce ever travelled over than we had along the banks of Como. The banks of many of the Italian and Swiss lakes are so steep and rocky, as not to admit of roads; that of Como is partly of this character. A small foot-path is all the communication by land between one village and another, on the side along which we passed, for upwards of thirty miles. We entered upon this path about noon, and, owing to the steepness of the banks, were soon unmolested by the sun, which illuminated the woods, rocks, and villages of the opposite shore. The lake is narrow, and the shadows of the mountains were early thrown across it. It was beautiful to watch them travelling up the side of the hills for several hours, to remark one half of a village covered with shade, and the other bright with the strongest sunshine.

It was with regret that we passed every turn of this charming path, where every new picture was purchased by the loss of another which we would never have been tired of gazing at. The shores of the lake consist of steeps, covered with large sweeping woods of chestnut, spotted with villages; some clinging from the summits of the advancing rocks, and others hiding themselves within their recesses. Nor was the surface of the lake less interesting than its shores; part of it glowing with the richest green and gold, the reflection of the illuminated woods and part shaded with a soft blue tint. The picture was still further diversified by the number of sails which stole lazily by us as we paused in the woods above them. After all this we had the moon. It was impossible not to contrast that repose, that

complacency of spirit, produced by these lovely scenes, with the sensations I had experienced two or three days before, in passing the Alps. At the lake of Como, my mind ran through a thousand dreams of happiness, which might be enjoyed upon its banks, if heightened by conversation and the exercise of the social affections. Among the more awful scenes of the Alps, I had not a thought of man, or a single created being; my whole soul was turned to him who produced the terrible majesty before me. But I am too particular for the limits of my paper.

We followed the lake of Como to its head, and thence proceeded to Chiavenna, where we began to pass a range of the Alps, which brought us into the country of the Grisons at Sovaza. From Sovaza we pursued the valley of Missox,¹ in which it is situated, to its head; passed Mount Adel to Hinter Rhine, a small village near one of the sources of the Rhine. We pursued this branch of the Rhine downward through the Grisons to Richenau, where we turned up the other branch of the same river, followed it to Cimut, a small village near its source. Here we quitted the Grisons, and entered Switzerland at the valley of Urseren, and pursued the course of the Reuss down to Altorf; thence we proceeded, partly upon the lake, and partly behind the mountains on its banks, to Lucerne, and thence to Zurich. From Zurich, along the banks of the lake, we continued our route to Rickesweel: here we left the lake to visit the famous church and convent of Ensiedlen, and thence to Glarus. But this catalogue must be shockingly tedious. Suffice it to say, that, after passing a day in visiting the romantic valley of Glarus, we proceeded by the lake of Wallenstadt and the canton of Appenzell to the lake of Constance, where this letter was begun nine days ago. From Constance we proceeded along the banks of the Rhine to Schaffhausen, to view the fall of the Rhine there. Magnificent as this fall certainly is, I must confess I was disappointed in it. I had raised my ideas too high.

We followed the Rhine downward about eight leagues from Schaffhausen, where we crossed it, and proceeded by Baden

¹ Missox: so W. The name of the river is Moesa, and of the valley Mesocco: W.'s Mount Adel = Adula, Richenau = Reichenau, Cimut = Chiamut, Rickesweel = Richterswil, Ensiedlen = Einsiedeln. His spelling of proper names is often original and capricious.

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to Lucerne. I am at this present moment (14th September) writing at a small village in the road from Grindelwald to Lauterbrunnen. By consulting your maps, you will find these villages in the south-east part of the canton of Berne, not far from the lakes of Thun and Brienz. After viewing the valley of Lauterbrunnen, we shall have concluded our tour of the more Alpine parts of Switzerland. We proceed thence to Berne, and propose, after making two or three small excursions about the lake of Neuchatel, to go to Basle, a town of Switzerland, upon the Rhine, whence we shall, if we find we can afford it, take advantage of the river down to Cologne, and so cross to Ostend, where we shall take the paquet for Margate. To-day is the 14th of September; and I hope we shall be in England by the 10th of October.

I have had, during the course of this delightful tour, a great deal of uneasiness from an apprehension of your anxiety on my account. I have thought of you perpetually; and never have my eyes burst upon a scene of particular loveliness but I have almost instantly wished that you could for a moment be transported to the place where I stood to enjoy it. I have been more particularly induced to form those wishes, because the scenes of Switzerland have no resemblance to any I have found in England; and consequently it may probably never be in your power to form an idea of them. We are now, as I observed above, upon the point of quitting the most sublime and beautiful parts; and you cannot imagine the melancholy regret which I feel at the idea. I am a perfect enthusiast in my admiration of Nature in all her various forms; and I have looked upon, and as it were conversed with, the objects which this country has presented to my view so long, and with such increasing pleasure, that the idea of parting from them oppresses me with a sadness similar to what I have always felt in quitting a beloved friend.

There is no reason to be surprised at the strong attachment which the Swiss have always shown to their native country. Much of it must undoubtedly have been owing to those charms which have already produced so powerful an effect upon me, and to which the rudest minds cannot possibly be indifferent. Ten thousand times in the course of this tour have I regretted

the inability of my memory to retain a more strong impression of the beautiful forms before me; and again and again, in quitting a fortunate station, have I returned to it with the most eager avidity, in the hope of bearing away a more lively picture. At this moment, when many of these landscapes are floating before my mind, I feel a high [enjoyment] in reflecting that perhaps scarce a day of my life will pass in which I shall not derive some happiness from these images.

With regard to the manners of the inhabitants of this singular country, the impression which we have had often occasion to receive has been unfavourable; but it must be remembered that we have had little to do but with innkeepers, and those corrupted by perpetual intercourse with strangers. Had we been able to speak the language, which is German, and had time to insinuate ourselves into their cottages, we should probably have had as much occasion to admire the simplicity of their lives as the beauties of their country. My partiality to Switzerland, excited by its natural charms, induces me to hope that the manners of the inhabitants are amiable; but at the same time I cannot help frequently contrasting them with those of the French, and, as far as I have had opportunity to observe, they lose very much by the comparison. We not only found the French a much less imposing people, but that politeness diffused through the lowest ranks had an air so engaging that you could scarce attribute it to any other cause than real benevolence. During the time, which was near a month, that we were in France, we had not once [to complain of] the smallest deficiency of courtesy in any person, much less of any positive rudeness. We had also perpetual occasion to observe that cheerfulness and sprightliness for which the French have always been remarkable. But I must remind you that we crossed it at the time when the whole nation was mad with joy in consequence of the revolution. It was a most interesting period to be in France; and we had many delightful scenes, where the interest of the picture was owing solely to this cause. I was also much pleased with what I saw of the Italians during the short time we were amongst them. We had several times occasion to observe a softness and elegance which contrasted strongly with the severity and

austereness of their neighbours on the other side of the Alps. It was with pleasure I observed, at a small inn on the lake of Como, the master of it playing upon his harpsichord, with a large collection of Italian music about him. The outside of the instrument was such that it would not much have graced an English drawing-room; but the tones that he drew from it were by no means contemptible.

But it is time to talk a little about England. When you write to my brothers, I must beg of you to give my love, and tell them I am sorry it has not been in my power to write to them. Kit will be surprised he has not heard from me, as we were almost upon terms of regular correspondence. I had not heard from Richard for some time before I set out. I did not call on him when I was in London; not so much because we were determined to hurry through London, but because he, as many of our friends at Cambridge did, would look upon our scheme as mad and impracticable. I expect great pleasure, on my return to Cambridge, in exulting over those of my friends who threatened us with such an accumulation of difficulties as must undoubtedly render it impossible for us to perform the tour.

Every thing, however, has succeeded with us far beyond my most sanguine expectations. We have, it is true, met with little disasters occasionally; but, far from depressing, they rather gave us additional resolution and spirits. We have both enjoyed most excellent health; and we have been this some time so inured to walking, that we are become almost insensible of fatigue. We have several times performed a journey of thirteen leagues over the most mountainous parts of Switzerland without any more weariness than if we had been walking an hour in the groves of Cambridge. Our appearance is singular; and we have often observed, that, in passing through a village, we have excited a general smile. Our coats, which we had made light on purpose for our journey, are of the same piece; and our manner of bearing our bundles, which is upon our heads, with each an oak stick in our hands, contributes not a little to that general curiosity which we seem to excite.

But I find I have again relapsed into egotism, and must here entreat you, not only to pardon this fault, but also to make

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allowance for the illegible hand and desultory style of this letter. It has been written, as you will see by its different shades, at many sittings, and is, in fact, the produce of most of the leisure which I have had since it was begun, and is now finally drawing to a conclusion, Berne on the 16th of September. I flatter myself still with the hope of seeing you for a fortnight or three weeks, if it be agreeable to my uncle, as there will be no necessity for me to be in Cambridge before the 10th of November, but I shall be better able to judge whether I am likely to enjoy this pleasure in about three weeks. I shall probably write to you again before I quit France; if not, most certainly immediately on my landing in England. You will remember me affectionately to my uncle and aunt: as he was acquainted with my having given up all thoughts of a fellowship, he may, perhaps, not be so much displeased at this journey. I should be sorry if I have offended him by it. I hope my little cousin is well. I must now bid you adieu, with assuring you that you are perpetually in my thoughts, and that

I remain,

Most affectionately yours,

W. Wordsworth.

On looking over this letter, I am afraid you will not be able to read half of it. I must again beg you to excuse me.

Address: Miss Wordsworth, Rev. Wm. Cookson's, Long Stratton, Norfolk, L'Angleterre.

MS.

K(—)

11. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Forncett, October 6th [1790]

My dear Jane,

To shew you that want of generosity does not make a part of my character I answer your affectionate letter almost immediately after the receipt of it. I rejoice exceedingly to hear that your good father's health continues to amend. You do not mention your mother, so I conclude she is well; this gives me very great pleasure. I was informed of my Aunt's intended marriage when she was last in London; but secrecy was strictly

enjoined, so I conclude it was not at that time generally known. My joy was such as I have seldom felt on any occasion; and you are right in supposing that for a time it occupied all my thoughts. It concerns me much to hear that Mr. Rawson's health is not good, but I hope with you, that with a little more care on his part together with my Aunt's attentions it may be considerably improved; and if this is the case, her every wish will I think be answered; that God may grant her many years of uninterrupted happiness is my constant wish and prayer, as it must be of all her children. I have not much recollection of Mr. R.'s person, but I have a faint idea that he was married while I was at Halifax to a lady who, I think, I have since heard was dead; pray am I right? It is a question that for obvious reasons I cannot ask my Aunt. Since I have been acquainted with this event, I have thought, if possible with more pleasure than ever of visiting Halifax; remember, whenever I do revisit the place where I passed the happy hours of my childhood, I look upon myself as under a sort of engagement to spend a short time with you, in whose company many of its happiest were spent.

If you have been informed that I have had so dear a friend as my Brother William traversing (on foot and with only one companion) the mountains of Switzerland during the whole of this summer, and that he is not yet returned, I flatter myself you will be anxious, on my account to hear of his welfare. I received a very long letter from him a week ago, which was begun upon the banks of the lake of Constance ten days before its conclusion at the City of Berne. After assuring me that he had enjoyed most excellent health and spirits during the whole of their tour; and that every thing had succeeded with them beyond their most sanguine expectations, he proceeds to give me a short account of their route, without dwelling much upon particular scenes, as his paper would scarcely allow him to tell me all that was absolutely necessary. I assure you when I trace his paths upon the maps I wonder that his strength and courage have not sunk under the fatigues he must have undergone; he says, however, that they have frequently performed a journey of thirteen leagues (thirty-nine miles you know) over the most mountainous parts of Switzerland without feeling

more weariness than if they had been sauntering an hour in the groves of Cambridge, they are so inured to walking. William is a perfect enthusiast in his admiration of nature in all her various forms, therefore he must have had the highest possible enjoyment in viewing the sublime scenes of Switzerland. I confess, however that had he acquainted me with his scheme before its execution I should (as many of his other friends did) have looked upon it as mad and impracticable, but he speaks of every thing he has seen in raptures and says not a word of difficulties or dangers. It perhaps may be some amusement to you to trace his route upon your maps, therefore I will give you a rough sketch of it, mentioning only the principal places he stopped at. After quitting the Grande Chartreuse from which place and St. Vallier on the Rhone his last letter to me was written, they passed through Savoy to Geneva, and thence along the Pays de Vaud side of the lake to Villeneuve a small town seated at its head, from Ville Neuve along the Rhone to Martigny, thence to Chamouny to visit the Glaciers of Savoy, from Chamouny back again to Martigny, and thence up the Valais to Brig; at Brig, he says 'we quitted the Valais and passed the Alps at the Simplon in order to visit part of Italy; from D'Oma Dossola, a town of Italy which lay in our route, we proceeded to the lake of Locarno to visit the Boromoean islands, and thence to Como. A more charming path was never travelled than we had along the lake of Como. The banks of many of the Italian and Swiss lakes are so steep and rocky as not to admit of roads; that of Como is partly of this character, a small foot path is all the communication between one village and another for upwards of thirty miles; we entered upon this path about noon and owing to the steepness of the banks were soon unmolested by the sun which illuminated the woods, rocks, and villages of the opposite shore; the lake is narrow and the shadows of the mountains were early thrown across it, the effect [of] which as they travelled up the hills was inconceivably beautiful, one half of a village frequently covered with shade, the other bright with the strongest sunshine. The shores of the lake consist of large sweeping woods of chestnut, spotted with villages some clinging from the summits of the advancing rocks, others

hiding themselves within their recesses. The picture was still further diversified by the number of sails which stole lazily by us as we paused in the woods above them. After all this we had the moon. It was impossible not to contrast that repose, that complacency of spirit produced by these lovely scenes, with the sensations I had experienced two or three days before in passing the Alps. At Como my mind ran thro' a thousand dreams of happiness which might be enjoyed upon its banks if heightened by conversation and the exercise of the social affections; among the more awful scenes of the Alps I had not a thought of man or a single created being, my whole soul was turned to him who formed the terrible majesty before me. We followed the lake of Como to its head, and thence proceeded to Chiavenna where we began to pass a range of the Alps which brought us into the country of the Grisons at Sovaza, from Sovaza we pursued the valley of Misso (in which it is situated) to its head, passed Mount Adel to Hinter Rhine, a small village near one of the sources of the Rhine. We pursued this branch of the Rhine downwards through the Grisons to Richeneau where we turned up the other branch of the same river to Cimut a small village near its source, here we quitted the Grisons, entered Switzerland at the valley of Urseren and pursued the course of the Reuss down to Altorf, thence we proceeded partly on the lake and partly behind the mountains on its banks to Lucerne, and thence to Zurich, from Zurich along the banks of the lake to Rickleswell where we left the lake to visit the famous church and convent of Enseilden and thence to Glarus.' I have just recollected myself that to you this catalogue must be shockingly tedious, suffice it to say then, that they proceeded by the lake of Wallstadt and the Canton of Apanzall to the lake of Constance, from Constance to Schaffhausen to view the fall of the Rhine there, and thence by Baden back to Lucerne. After this they crossed over into the Canton of Berne. A part of Wm's letter was written at a village on the road between Lauterbrunnen and Grindelwald, after visiting the valley of Lauterbrunnen and the lakes of Thun and Brientz they were to proceed to Berne where this letter was concluded, and thence to the lake of Neuchatel; and after making a few small excursions

near that lake they intended to go to Basle a town upon the Rhine, from Basle along the river to Ostend where they would take the Pacquet for Margate. I will make no apology for troubling you with th[is] long detai[l] as

(*MS. much torn in following passage*)¹

to trace this route—I cannot however conclude without telling [you that] to the 6th of September the joint expences of my Br and his co[m]panion were only] twelve pounds. I am to have a letter immediately upon his [return, which cannot] be before the 10th of Octobr and oh how impatiently do I expect, [] I have had a great deal of anxiety during my dear William[’s absence and per]haps been more uneasy than I ought but I will not trouble [you with my] fears and hopes.— I had a letter from my Br Kitt the other [day, and expect one] from my Aunt as I hope to hear that she has fixed a time [? for her wedding.] [?] me too, for at her time of life she ought not to pre[] there are only trifling obstacles in the way. I hope you will see [] that you will be very particular in your accounts of her house, [her] What sort of a man is Mr Rawson?² by this question I do not mean is [he an amiable] man, or a sensible man? for I know he is both amiable and [sens]ible, but I wish to know whether he is grave or lively, younger [] than my Aunt or older? little or tall? fat or thin? on looking [over this I can] scarcely help laughing at this string of womanish queries. When you [see them] pray give my love to them. You say you fear Elizabeth may be [] little: indeed I fear it too, for she is now arrived at an age when girls cease to grow, though I really think that since I was her age I ha[ve grown] almost the head taller than I [was.] Pray what sort of [] Harriet B— and Mary Grimshaw and the three Miss Fergusons.³ I wish you would give my love to them when you see them.

¹ The words added in square brackets are conjectural.

² In the following December or January ‘Aunt’ Threlkeld married Samuel Rawson, a widower and wealthy mill-owner, who lived at Mill House, on the banks of the Calder, about three miles from Halifax.

³ The Fergusons (Samuel, Edward, Anne, Elizabeth, and Martha) were the orphan nephews and nieces of D. W.’s ‘Aunt’ Threlkeld, and, like D. W., were brought up by her.

OCTOBER 1790

How are Mr and Mrs Ralph & their family? I have a great regard for Mr Ralph so don't forget to tell me. Does Miss Mellin's school flourish? It is now time to talk a little about Forncett. My dear little cousin is the delight of all our hearts, she is the most charming little creature that ever was. I think she is like what Sophia Ralph was; her countenance is quite the sweetest I ever saw and she is all life and activity. My Aunt we expect will be confined the latter end of Jan. I shall not answer your foolish raillery any more. Indeed, I cannot suppose you entertain any such improbable suspicions as you are pleased to hint. I shall think you unkind if you say any thing more to me upon the subject. I will however remember the promise I have made you, and accept yours in return.

I once saw the Miss Martineau you mention at Norwich; Mr.¹ and Mrs. Martineau her Br and Sr we are very well acquainted with; last summer we spent two or three days at their house, and had an invitation from them this summer to the musical festival, which we did not accept. My school goes on as usual, three of my scholars are going to service but I shall supply their places. Be so good as tell my Aunt you have heard from me. She may perhaps wish to know something of my Brother Wm. You complain of the dullness of a town at a general mourning, we have greatly the advantage over you *here*, as *we* are the only people who have taken his Royal Highness's death to heart.² I mention this circumstance because I think it will give you an idea of the respectability of the place. I cannot conclude without entreating you to find some other way of making trial of my generosity, than by so long a silence as your last. This request I confess comes with a bad grace from me who have so often put yours to far greater trials. I am now particularly anxious to hear from you soon as I wish to know something more than my Aunt told me concerning the situation of her house, etc., etc., and also to know every thing you can tell me upon the subject of her marriage. Pray make

¹ Probably Philip Meadows M. (d. 1828), a Norwich surgeon, unitarian, and member of the literary circle of which William Taylor, the translator of Bürger's *Ballads*, was the centre. He was the uncle of Harriet M.

² Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, the King's brother.

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my affectionate remembrances to all your family, particularly Ellen and Harriot. Give my love to my Aunt's family and to Mr. and Mrs. Threlkeld. Pray, what does Elizabeth say about my old friend Peggy Taylor? Adieu my dear Girl—believe me always your affecte Friend

D. Wordsworth

I have written this letter so ill I am quite ashamed of it. I fear a great part of it, about my Brother may be uninteresting to you, but you will know how to pardon the weakness which led me on insensibly much further than was my intention when I began the history. William's companion is a Cambridge young man. I fear you will not be able to read half my letter.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Willm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

12. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

Fornecett, Monday mornng [1791]

May 28rd

I once more venture to address you, my dearest Jane. Here I stop and put this question to myself *How* shall I do it? In what manner can I accost a friend whom I have so repeatedly neglected, whose goodness I have so often abused? On that goodness, however, I should rely for pardon with unshaken confidence were not the circumstances of the present case so peculiarly aggravating. You wrote me a long and very kind letter in January, this letter I suffered to remain unanswered till the arrival of another which I ought not to have deferred replying to for a day, and believe me, I did proceed half way towards the conclusion of a letter on the very evening on which I received it; this letter I laid by till the morning intending to finish it then, but when morning arrived I delayed it till evening and so on, till that letter was of too old a date to send. I then must be obliged to begin a fresh sheet, and here again my procrastinating disposition prevailed over my judgment, and believe me, my inclination too, for when I have once got the paper before me I am never so happy as when writing to my

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friends except when my brothers are with me. Will you, can you once more for[give] me? I will not say any thing more upon the subject which is always a tedious one. I confess my guilt and throw myself upon your mercy. I was very much obliged to you, my dear friend, for your information concerning my Aunt's marriage, a subject which you rightly judged to be more interesting to me than any other. I hope her happiness is now complete, and God grant that it may long continue so! She is certainly one of the best of women. I am very anxious to be introduced to her husband of whose character I have had the most pleasing accounts from all hands; but my Aunt's choice of him is a sufficient encomium. I imagine she has now received her company, been to church and gone through all those *awful* forms of which *we* were happily rid by leaving Penrith immediately after my Uncle's marriage. Am I too bold (too unreasonable I will confess myself) in requesting that while all the events of Mrs. R.'s career as a bride are yet fresh in your memory, you will write to me? I should like to know what visitors she had, how she was dressed etc etc etc. You will know how to interpret these etc. I longed to join the party in London, as you will suppose, but fully promise myself the pleasure of seeing all my friends together at Halifax in two or certainly three years. I will be with you next summer but one if any of my Aunt's sisters happen to be with her, if not I must wait till one of them comes. Do not consider this scheme as the idea of a moment; I am fully determined upon it, but have not yet said a word of it to any friends here or at Penrith; nor shall I mention it till there is some prospect of Miss Cowper's coming. When I wrote to my Aunt I told her that my Uncle was going into the North and would probably bring Miss C. with him; he has, however, given up the whole scheme which I am not sorry for, as my going to Halifax is at present quite out of the question, and Miss C. will, probably, not stay so long as two years. Oh! Jane how much pleasure do I expect from your society when our meeting takes place! how delightful will it be to look back upon those days which we passed together, without any troubles but such as the promise of an hour's play together would at once alleviate! We shall retrace the adventures of the

baby-house, the little parlour, (I now fancy I see Harriot's shop fixed at one end of the long window-seat) the croft, the ware house, nay, even the back kitchen, where I full well remember a scheme which we formed and which, if it had not been frustrated was to have procured us a night's rest together, but alas! Mama was not to be moved. I hope my brother William will call at Halifax on his way into Cumberland; he is now in Wales where he intends making a pedestrian tour along with his old friend and companion Jones, at whose [house h]e is at present staying. How I shall envy him the happiness of seein[g] all my old friends! and how earnestly do I wish that I could accompany him! but it must not be. I hope you will see much of him when he is at Halifax; I flatter myself it will give you pleasure to see some of *my friends*. I often figure to myself my old companions whom I left mere girls, become women. You, I fancy tall and rather slender; Ellen, I suppose, is not much altered, but Harriot, I think must, I fancy her a smart looking girl with a light, slender person. Harriot [? Bairstow,] I suppose, is a tall fine-looking woman, and Mary Grimshaw rather fat and I should suppose about my height; I think I must be *nearly* as tall as Patty Ferguson, certainly not quite so tall, I believe, however I am much grown since my aunt saw me; if Mr. Griffith comes to Forncett he shall have my weight and measure; you then can form an idea of me, and if he goes to Halifax before he visits Forncett pray send me yours, but, indeed, by letter you may tell me your weight. My Aunt would tell you that she saw my Brothers Rd and Wm in town; I hope John will arrive there in about a month. We are daily expecting tidings of the Abergavenny.¹ I heard from my brother Kitt lately, he tells me he has been upon a pedestrian tour amongst the lakes with two of his school-fellows. He is to come to Cambridge next October but one. The idea of having him so near me is, you will imagine, very agreeable to me; I hope we shall see much of each other; he is a most amiable young man.

The intelligence which I have to give you concerning our affairs with Lord Lonsdale will, I know, afford you great satisfaction: we have every reason to hope that the business will in

¹ Abergavenny: *The Earl of Abergavenny* was the name of John's ship.

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about a year, be terminated to our advantage, we have got rid of the court of exchequer which is a great matter.

I have been three times at Norwich lately which is something extraordinary as we stir little from home. These three journeys produced three visits to the theatre, but my principal errand was twice of a disagreeable nature: I went each time to get a tooth drawn; I have been much troubled with the toothache lately so my uncle determined that I should consult a dentist; but however I first went to take the advice of Mr. Martineau; he drew me a tooth and as I was fearful of beginning with a dentist I went no further. I was, however, obliged to make another journey the following week when Mr. M. took another tooth from me, and I have since been perfectly well. I staid at Norwich several days each time. I hope to hear that your dear father's health continues to improve. Pray make my particular compts to him, your Mother, and all your sisters. Do you go into the country this summer? We have lately enjoyed ourselves exceedingly, the weather has been so delightful. I rise about six every morning and, as I have no companion walk with a book till half past eight, if the weather permits; if not I read in the house; sometimes we walk in the mornings, but seldom more than half an hour just before dinner; after tea we all walk together till about eight, and I then walk alone as long as I can in the garden; I am particularly fond of a moon-light or twilight walk—it is at this time that I think most of my absent friends. My brother William was with us six weeks in the depth of winter. You may recollect that at that time the weather was uncommonly mild; we used to walk every morning about two hours, and every evening we went into the garden at four or half past four and used to pace backwards and forwards till six. Unless you have accustomed yourself to this kind of walking you will have no idea that it can be pleasant, but I assure you it is most delightful, and if you and I happen to be together in the country, as we probably may at Mr. Rawson's, we will try how you like my plan if you are not afraid of the evening air.

The account you gave me of E. Threlkeld in your first letter was very pleasing to me. Pray give my love to her and Mary,

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of whom, by the bye, I should like to hear your opinion. You never mention Mary Grimshaw, is she handsome? is she lively or grave? or talkative, or silent? What kind of young women are the Miss Fergusons? I should suppose there is nothing striking in any of them. Are you intimate with Miss Dyson? or is she still in London? Are you much with Harriot Bairstow? How does our Betsy Ferguson look? and how does she dress? She formerly was sadly deficient in taste, and used to curl her hair and put on her cap with less skill than any girl I know. Pray give my love to the Fergusons and to all your family. Remember me also to Miss Griffith and Mr. and Mrs. Rawson.

My paper now admonishes me to conclude, which I cannot do without urgently requesting you to let me hear from you as soon as you can. My dearest girl, do not refuse to shew your generosity to me once more. I know you love me still—so do forgive and let me have another letter from you. I am always, believe me your very Sincere friend

D. Wordsworth

Excuse this scrawling. Pray make my congratulatory compts to Mr. Edward Swain. Ought *I* to *rejoice* at his marriage, for do I know what might have been my chance for him?

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Willm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

K. 13. *W. W. to William Mathews*¹

My address is Edward Jones, Esq.
Plas-yn-llan near Ruthin
Denbighshire

Friday, June 17th, [1791]

Dear Mathews,

For so long a silence it is totally impossible to find any apology, and I am even deprived by it of what I might otherwise have gained by throwing myself upon your candour and indul-

¹ Son of a London bookseller and brother to Charles M. the comic actor. When W. was at Cambridge, W. M. was an undergraduate at Pembroke College; about 1800 he went to the West Indies to practise law, and died there.

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gence, as such reliance must appear to you altogether a matter of necessity and not of choice. Moralists inform us that whoever meditates any crime *facti crimen habet*. May not the observation be reversed, and may not we also say that whoever thinks of, and resolves to execute, any good intention ought also to have the merit of the actual performance of it. If I could but establish this maxim, I should stand in need of no further apology, for I can with safety assure you, that not many days have passed over my head since my letter became due in which I have not resolved to write to you, and once upwards of two months ago actually took up the pen but was unfortunately interrupted. But it would be very idle to consume any more of this sheet prefacing and prosing in this manner. I shall therefore quit the subject, by requesting at once that you will grant me that indulgence which I totally forego claiming as a right, and only implore as a gift.

You will see by the date of this letter that I am in Wales, and whether you remember the places of Jones's residence, or no, will immediately conclude that I am with him. I quitted London about three weeks ago, where my time passed in a strange manner; sometimes whirled about by the vortex of its *strenua inertia*, and sometimes thrown by the eddy into a corner of the stream, where I lay in almost motionless indolence.

Think not, however, that I had not many very pleasant hours; a man must be unfortunate indeed who resides four months in Town without some of his time being disposed of in such a manner, as he would forget with reluctance. But I am extremely rude, after having neglected your letter so long, to talk so much about myself. I hope if you think it worth while to examine the connection of ideas in this letter, that you will find that I have been led naturally to say this much of myself. You will not attribute it merely to politeness if I now make a few enquiries about you, and the manner in which your time passes. I was happy to hear from your letter that you were so agreeably situated in respect to domestic enjoyment, and that your school hours could not be complained of as being too much under what may be called a Gothic regulation. How very unreasonable are even those among us who are not totally

unphilosophic in wishing for the end without undergoing the trouble of the means! I have often [wished], when I have found upon reflection how much of my time has lately passed unconnected with reading, that I could perceive in myself a small share of that improvement, which from your necessary engagements every day must render you more and more conscious of. All the conclusion that this reflection has ever been able to lead me to is how desirable an attainment would learning be, if the time exacted for it were not so great. Miserable weakness!

Have you heard from Terrot?¹ If not you will not be much surprized to hear from me now that I have never written to him. He passed thro' town without my seeing him, and had near been lost in his passage home. I received [a letter] from him a fortnight after his landing, to which I have yet unfortunately [sent] no reply. I am resolved, however, to do away the disgrace this very day. How ridiculous does this resolution, and the necessity of it, make me. I dare say it did not require a twentieth part of the exertion for Regulus (by the bye the story is a lie) to return to Carthage, or for lieutenant Riou to resolve to perish with the *Guardian*.²

I have almost exhausted my paper and found I have neither communicated, nor as I intended solicited much information. Under the latter head I purposed to have made many enquiries respecting the acquaintance which you have made with either Men, Women, or Books, since your arrival in Leicestershire; and whether your stock of happiness has upon the whole been upon the increase or the wane. Among other things I wished to have given you some account of the very agreeable manner, in which my time has been spent since I reached Wales, and of

¹ William Terrot, of Berwick-on-Tweed, at St. John's College, Cambridge, with W. W. from 1787 to 1791.

² Riou, Edward (1758-1801), a captain in the Navy; in 1791 his ship met an iceberg, and he only reached the Cape after much hardship, in which he displayed fine courage and seamanship. (v. Riou's *Journal of Proceedings on board the Guardian, with a narrative of the sufferings of the Boat's Crew after they left the ship; particulars of the proceedings in the Guardian till they arrived at the Cape*.—K.) In the next year he was made a Commander. In 1794 he was in the operations against Martinique, and with Nelson in 1801, when he fell at the battle of Copenhagen. He was reputed a perfect officer and is celebrated in Campbell's Ballad as 'gallant good Riou'.

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a tour which Jones and I intend making through its northern counties; on foot as you will naturally suppose. Of this expedition I hope however to be able to give you some account in my next. I must conclude with assuring you that I shall judge of the perfectness of your forgiveness by the alacrity with which you communicate it. Jones' compliments.

I am, most affectionately yours,
W. Wordsworth.

MS.
K(—)

14. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Fornceett Sunday mornng June 26th. [1791]

I am so much indebted to you, my dear Jane, for the steadiness of your friendship that I am at a loss for words to thank you. Believe me, however, my dearest girl, I am fully resolved in future never to put your affection for me to so severe a trial. I will not say that I have suffered as much as I deserve, but I have suffered so much as I hope will make me very unwilling to throw myself again into a similar situation. I am very happy to hear that your father's health continues to improve, and that your mother (of whom I heard by my aunt) continues to preserve her health and evenness of spirits. Long may you enjoy that domestic comfort uninterrupted for which your family is so remarkable, and which is in fact the only thing which deserves the name of happiness. I hope you will perform your promise of letting me have another letter from you very soon. I am anxious for a further account of my old friends. Poor Betsy Ferguson is probably dead ere this. It is very long since I have received so severe a shock as from the account you give me of her. Oh Jane how short a time has elapsed since she was as strong as healthy and perhaps more gay than we are. How are her sisters affected by her melancholy fate? I used to think that there was not that disinterested affection for each other amongst them which one always wishes and expects to see in children of the same family. Do not forget to answer all the questions I put to you in my last which you had not room to reply to. I hope you will have a pleasant jaunt to Leeds. Do

let me hear often from you, I never indeed my dearest Jane, will be so negligent in future. Be so good as tell my Aunt that I have expected a letter from her some time. I would have written to her if I had not been prevented by the expectation of a letter every post. I often hear from my brother William who is now in Wales where I think he seems so happy that it is probable he will remain there all the summer, or a great part of it: Who would not be happy enjoying the company of three young ladies in the Vale of Clwyd and without a rival? His friend Jones is a charming young man, and has five sisters, three of whom are at home at present, then there are mountains, rivers, woods and rocks, whose charms without any other inducement would be sufficient to tempt William to continue amongst them as long as possible. So that most likely he will have the pleasure of seeing you when he visits Halifax, which I hope he will do in his road to the North; he thinks with great pleasure of paying that place a visit where I have so many friends. I confess you are right in supposing me partial to William. I hope when you see him you will think my regard not misplaced; probably when I next see Kitt I shall love him as well, the difference between our ages at the time I was with him was much more perceptible than it will be at our next meeting; his disposition is of the same cast as William's, and his inclinations have taken the same turn, but he is much more likely to make his fortune; he is not so warm as William but has a most affectionate heart, his abilities though not so great perhaps as his brother's may be of more use to him as he has not fixed his mind upon any particular species of reading, or conceived an aversion to any. He is not fond of Mathematics but has resolution sufficient to study them because it will be impossible for him to obtain a fellowship without a knowledge of them. William you may have heard lost the chance, indeed the certainty of a fellowship by not combating his inclinations, he gave way to his natural dislike of studies so dry as many parts of the mathematics, consequently could not succeed at Cambridge. He reads Italian, Spanish, French, Greek and Latin, and English, but never opens a mathematical book. We promise ourselves much pleasure from reading Italian together at some time, he wishes that I was

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acquainted with the Italian poets, but how much have I to learn which plain English will teach me. William has a great attachment to poetry; indeed so has Kitt, but William particularly, which is not the most likely thing to produce his advancement in the world; his pleasures are chiefly of the imagination, he is never so happy as when in a beautiful country. Do not think from what I have said that he reads not [at] all, for he does read a great deal and not only poetry and those languages he is acquainted with but history etc etc. Kitt has made a very good proficiency in his learning and is certainly a very clever young man; he is just seventeen, so that October 92 we shall have him at Cambridge.

When I last wrote to you I told you that our affairs wore a promising aspect; they are now in a very critical state; our trial is to come on at the next Carlisle assizes, where we hope the justice of our cause will carry us through. Lord Lonsdale has retained all the best counsel, who except one, are engaged to serve him upon all occasions, and that one he had just engaged the moment before my brother went to him. We have got a very clever man on our side but as he is young he will not have much authority, his name is Christian, he is a friend of my Uncle, knows my brother William very well and I am very well acquainted with him, and a charming man he is; I hope, however, that what he wants in experience will be made up in zeal for our interest. You may perhaps have seen his name in the reviews; a pamphlet which he published lately upon the question whether Hastings' trial was to go on was highly spoken of. He is a professor of common law in the university of Cambridge.

We have been some time expecting tidings of my brother John; but have not any cause for uneasiness though we hear nothing of him, as the East India vessels have been detained in consequence of the expected war with Spain. My Aunt and I are at present pleasing ourselves with the thoughts of riding a good deal this summer; she is to ride double, and I upon a little horse of my Uncle's. The country about us though not romantic or picturesque is very pleasing, the surface is tolerably varied, and we have great plenty of wood but a sad want of water.

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I think I once mentioned the Miss Burroughes's to you, I am more intimate with them than any other young people; indeed we have only two other young women in our neighbourhood; and one of them I dislike very much and the other is at too great a distance to [allow] us to have much communication with each other. I find [the Miss] Burroughes's improve much upon a further knowledge of the[m]. They] are indeed very agreeable girls; I had a very pleasant walk with [th]em on Friday evening and I hope for another this evening as I am going to call upon them. I cannot help often regretting that I have not a more intimate friend near me; but I am convinced that I shall never form a friendship that will not appear trifling indeed compared with that I feel for you; you are the friend of my childhood, and Oh! how endearing a thought is that. You shared all my little distresses and were the partner of all my pleasures. It gives me great concern when I think that I ever gave you pain by my attachment to Peggy Taylor; surely I never appeared to give her the preference. I am well convinced that she never held so large a share of my affection as you by many degrees. You are disappointed that I do not think of visiting Halifax sooner than the spring of the year 98. I do assure you that nothing but the most powerful reasons could tempt me to defer the execution of my plan so long. By that time I shall be my own mistress and though I would do nothing inconsistent with the duty I owe my Uncle and Aunt, yet I shall then be able to do it of myself without all the difficulty which I should have before my coming of age. I shall also by that time know what is the amount of my possessions and can square my proceedings accordingly, for in the present uncertain state of our fortunes I should be certain of meeting with a refusal on account of the expense attending so long a journey. We shall either be very well off in regard to money matters or be left without a farthing except Richard's estate, for what money we have if the trial goes against us will be swallowed by the gentlemen of the law. Whatever is the result of this tedious suit I am prepared to meet it; I fear not poverty in my youth and why should I expect it in age, when I have 4 Brothers all of whom have received good educations and suitable to their

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situations in life, and who are all sincerely attached to me? While I am young I thank God I am not destitute of the means of supporting myself, independent of the assistance which I may expect from my Gmr and the rest of my friends, therefore I can bear the worst with fortitude and put myself into a situation by which I may procure a livelihood till my Brothers are able to assist me; you shall hear more of this if we are unfortunate, but which I hope is not likely, in the meantime do not say anything of the hint I have given you. I was indeed greatly mortified on hearing of Mr. W.'s bad success,¹ every friend to humanity must applaud his zeal and lament that it failed in its effect. I beg my dear Friend, that you will write as soon as possible and a long letter.

Yours unalterably D. W.

Monday Eveng.

I am very sorry to hear you have ever so troublesome a complaint as a pain in your side, pray tell me particularly what is the general state of your health in your next. I am indeed very healthy. I am going to Stratton this eveng and shall put my letter into the office. I go alone, am not I daring?

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr Willm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

K. 15. *W. W. to William Mathews*

Plas-yn-llan, August 13th, [1791.]

Dear Mathews,

I am extremely concerned to find from your last letter that your share of happiness is so small, and that your time is consumed, and your spirits worn out, in unproductive labour. I should condole with you with greater pleasure, or more properly with less uneasiness, on this misfortune, if I were enabled to point out to you, the method by which your discontent might be allayed. I cannot however think but that your complaints

¹ Wilberforce had asked leave of the House of Commons to bring in a bill for slave-emancipation, but after a long debate his motion was rejected. In the autumn he brought in a bill for gradual abolition, which was carried by 235 to 85; the date being fixed for 1796.

about the diminution of your knowledge must be altogether groundless. Not that I accuse you of a splenetic disposition wilfully fostered by yourself. I think the fatigue which you undergo is a sufficient apology, for that depression of spirits which disposes you to look on the dark side of things. But were you released from this irksome toil, take my word for it, as soon as your spirits became tolerably chearful, you would find that you had been regularly tho' unconsciously advancing. It cannot possibly be otherwise. As to the idea of the decay of your mental powers, you may easily get rid of it, by reading Pope's description of the cave of spleens in the *Rape of the Lock*.

I regret much not having been made acquainted with your wish to have employed your vacation in a pedestrian tour, both on your own account—as it would have contributed greatly to exhilarate your spirits—and on mine, as we should have gained much from the addition of your society. Had I not disgraced myself by deferring to write to you so long, this might easily have been accomplished. Such an excursion would have served like an Aurora Borealis to gild your long Lapland night of melancholy. I know not that you are curious to have any account of our tour. If you are, I must beg you to excuse me from entering into so wide a field, contenting yourself with being informed, that we visited the greater part of North Wales, without having any reason to complain of disappointed expectations.

I wrote to Terrot the very moment after I had concluded my letter to you, and am sorry to say I have not heard from him since. I am fortunately of a disposition to impute this to any other cause than want of regard. Speaking on this subject, I must inform you I was a little disappointed in not finding a letter from you immediately on my return.

You desire me to communicate to you copiously my observations on modern literature, and transmit to you a cup replete with the waters of that fountain. You might as well have solicited me to send you an account of the tribes inhabiting the central regions of the African Continent. God knows my incursions into the fields of modern literature—excepting in our own language three volumes of *Tristram Shandy*, and two or three papers of the *Spectator*, half subdued—are absolutely

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nothing. Were I furnished with a dictionary and a grammar, and other requisites, I might perhaps make an attack upon Italy, an attack valiant ; but probably my expedition, like a redoubted one of Caligula's of old, though of another kind, might terminate in gathering shells out of Petrarch, or seaweed from Marino. The truth of the matter is that when in Town I did *little*, and since I came here I have done nothing. A miserable account! However I have not in addition to all this to complain of bad spirits. That would be the devil indeed. I rather think that this gaiety increases with my ignorance, as a spendthrift grows more extravagant, the nearer he approximates to a final dissipation of his property. I was obliged to leave all my books but one or two behind me. I regret much not having brought my Spanish grammar along with me. By peeping into it occasionally I might perhaps have contrived to keep the little Spanish or some part of it, that I was master of. I am prodigiously incensed at those rascal creditors of yours. What do they not deserve? Pains, stripes, imprisonments, &c, &c. If you should happen to write to Terrot shortly, I will thank you for informing him, that I wrote to him some time ago, and wish much to hear from him. It is not impossible that he may not have received my letter, as perhaps it would go by cross posts. I heard from Greenwood¹ for the first time the very day I received your last. He is in Yorkshire with his father, and writes in high spirits, his letter altogether irregular and fanciful. He seems to me to have much of Yorick in his disposition ; at least Yorick, if I am not mistaken, had a deal of the male mad-cap in him, but G. out-madcaps him quite. Adieu, hoping to hear from you soon, and that your letter will bring gladder tidings of yourself. I remain most affectionately yours. Cheer up is the word.

W. Wordsworth.

K. 16. *W. W. to William Mathews*

Cambridge, Sept. 23, [1791.]

My dear Mathews,

I shall not be easy till I think this letter has reached you. I did not receive yours till this very moment. I am much

¹ Robert H. Greenwood, a school companion at Hawkshead.—K.

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distressed that—indicating as it does a state of mind so much in need of the consolation which friendship can alone impart—that consolation I have been till this very hour unable to administer. Your letter would arrive in Wales not long after I quitted it, on a summons from Mr. Robinson,¹ a gentleman you most likely have heard me speak of, respecting my going into orders, and taking a curacy at Harwich where his interest chiefly lies, which curacy he considered as introductory to the living. I thought it was best to pay my respects to him [in] person, to inform him that I was not of age.² Jones going to Chester just at my departure, and continuing there some time, your letter was not sent after me to Town till his return home, which was not till the 21st instant. From Town it was sent after me here. I received it this morning. I will not employ many words in assuring you of the distress it caused in me to find you so unhappy. It is evident by the manner in which you address me you are persuaded I am deeply interested in whatever affects your happiness. Contenting myself with assuring that here you are not mistaken, but that it is probable my regard for you is greater than your diffidence in your power of winning esteem might encourage you to suppose, I shall proceed to make a few observations on your letter, more impelled by a wish to reconcile you to your fortune, than by a hope of succeeding, or the confidence that what I have to say is of much weight.

I imagine it would be altogether an idle labour to attempt

¹ John Robinson (1727–1802), *v.* Table p. 564, was articled to his aunt's husband, Richard W. of Sockbridge (W. W.'s grandfather), whom he succeeded as law-agent and land-steward to Sir James Lowther, Earl of Lonsdale. Through the Lowther interest he became M.P. for Westmorland (1764–74), but in 1770, when his patron turned whig, he refused to follow him and resigned his land-agency in favour of his cousin, John W. Lord North made him Sec. of the Treasury (1770–82), and he was M.P. for Harwich (hence his influence there) from 1774 till his death. In 1773 he was made a D.C.L. of Oxford; in 1784 he declined a peerage. In 1787 Pitt appointed him Surveyor-General of Woods and Forests. He was a great favourite of George III. A man of great influence, he was well known for his zeal and success in obtaining posts for his relatives and friends. Both the cousin and the brother of W. W. owed their captaincies in the East India Service to him. An affectionate letter to W. W. in 1788 is extant, urging him to 'stick close to College for the first 2 or 3 years', and hoping to 'hear him go out Senior Wrangler'.

² The age for admission to Anglican orders is twenty-three.

to shew that it is possible to be happy in your present situation. It is much more easy to prevent a dissatisfaction like yours from taking root, than, when it has taken root, to check its vegetation and stop the extravagant stretch of its branches, overshadowing and destroying with their baneful influence, every neighbouring image of cheerfulness and comfort. I take it for granted that you are not likely to continue long in your present employment, but when you leave it how you can put into execution the plan you speak of I cannot perceive. It is impossible you can ever have your father's consent to a scheme which to a parent at least, if not to every one else, must appear wild even to insanity. It is an observation to whose truth I have long since consented that small certainties are the bane of great talents.

Convinced as I am of this, I cannot look with much satisfaction on your present situation, yet still I think you ought to be dissuaded from attempting to put in practice the plan you speak of. I do not think you could ever be happy while you were conscious that you were a cause of such sorrow to your parents, as they must undoubtedly be oppressed with; when all that they will know of you is that you are wandering about the world, without perhaps a house to your head. I cannot deny that were I so situated, as to be without relations, to whom I were accountable for my actions, I should perhaps prefer your idea to your present situation, or to vegetating on a paltry curacy. Yet still there is another objection which would have influence upon me which is this. I should not be able to reconcile to my ideas of right, the thought of wandering about a country, without a certainty of being able to maintain myself [] being indebted for my existence to those charities of which the acceptance might rob people not half so able to support themselves as myself. It is evident there are a thousand ways in which a person of your education might get his bread, as a recompence for his labour, and while that continues to be the case, for my own part I confess I should be unwilling to accept it on any other conditions. I see many charms in the idea of travelling, much to be enjoyed and much to be learnt, so many that were we in possession of perhaps even less than a hundred

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a year apiece, which would amply obviate the objection I have just made, and without any relations to whom we were accountable, I would set out with you this moment with all my heart, not entertaining a doubt but that by some means or other we should be soon able to secure ourselves that independence you so ardently pant after, and what is more with minds furnished with such a store of ideas as would enable us to enjoy it. But this is not the case; therefore, for my own part, I resign the idea. I would wish you to do the same.

What then is to be done? Hope and industry are to be your watchwords and I warrant you their influence will secure you the victory. In order to defend yourself from the necessity of being immured for the future, in such a cell as your present, determine to spare no pains to cultivate the powers of your mind, and you may be certain of being able to support yourself in London. You know there are certain little courts in different parts of London, which are called bags. If you stumble into one of them, there is no advancing, if you wish to proceed on your walk, you must return the way you went in. These bags of Life are what every man of spirit dreads, and ought to dread. Be industrious, and you never need get your head into them, let hope be your walking staff, and your fortune is made. Adieu. God bless you. I shall be impatient to hear from you. Direct to me here. I shall stay here till the University fills. . . .

MS.

17. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

Fornceett, October 9th, 1791.

My dearest Jane,

I have very long wished for a letter from you, and now feel the consequences of my own repeated neglect of you. I cannot *claim* the right of hearing from you, I cannot even say I am not treated as I deserve—I can only then assure my dear Friend of my unshaken confidence in her, and entreat her to let me hear from her immediately. Since I last wrote to you our affairs with Lord Lonsdale have arrived at an interesting point, which I suppose was got over as favorably as we might expect, but things are not yet finally settled.

OCTOBER 1791

My Brother John is arrived in England, and I am told is grown a very tall handsome man; I hope we shall see him at Forncett ere long. Kitt entered at Trinity College and I hope too to see him by this time next year. William is at Cambridge. You see I give you a proof that I suppose you are still much interested in every thing in which I am interested by employing so large a portion of a short letter in giving you the history of our little affairs. I am anxious to know how you have spent your time at Leeds—in short I want much to hear from you. The last time you wrote I recollect you told me you had much to tell me: it is now at least four months ago; since that time you must have added considerably to your stock of materials. I hope your father continues tolerably well. I have not time for saying more than, that I remain, my dearest Jane, yours ever.

D. Wordsworth

Mr. Wilberforce is at Forncett. I know not when my Brother William will go into the North; probably not so soon as he intended, as he is going to begin a new course of study which he perhaps may not be able to go on with so well in that part of the world, as I conjecture he may find it difficult to meet with books. He is going, by the advice of my Uncle William, to study the Oriental languages. Pray write soon. Give my love to your sisters.

Franked and addressed: Wm. Wilberforce, Thetford, Octr tenth 1791—to Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

K. 18. *W. W. to William Mathews*

Brighton, Nov. 28, [1791]

Dear Mathews,

I have been prevented from replying to your letter, by an uncertainty respecting the manner in which I should dispose of myself for the winter, and which I have expected to be determined every day this month past. I am now on my way to Orleans, where I purpose to pass the winter, and am detained here by adverse winds. I was very happy to hear that you had

given up your travelling scheme, that your father had consented to your changing your situation, and that in consequence your mind was much easier. I approve much of your resolution to stay where you are, till you meet with a more eligible engagement, provided your health does not materially suffer by it. It argues a manly spirit which you will undoubtedly be careful to preserve. I am happy to find that my letter afforded you some consolation. There are few reflections more pleasing than the consciousness that one has contributed in the smallest degree to diminish the anxiety of one's friends. I wrote to Terrot a week ago, requesting that he would not fail to give me a letter at Orleans, as soon as possible. I never have heard from him in answer to the letter I addressed to him from Wales. This I am extremely sorry for. I know not if you have been informed he has lost his second brother in the East Indies. He was shot, though I was told not in an engagement; but I do not know the circumstances. [] informed me, who had been staying with Terrot during the summer.

I expect I assure you considerable pleasure from my sojourn on the other side of the water, and some little improvement, which God knows I stand in sufficient need of.

I am doomed to be an idler through my whole life. I have read nothing this age, nor indeed did I ever. Yet with all this I am tolerably happy. Do you think this ought to be a matter of congratulation to me, or no? For my own part I think certainly not. My uncle, the clergyman, proposed to me a short time ago to begin a course of Oriental literature, thinking that that was the best field for a person to distinguish himself in, as a man of letters. To oblige him I consented to pursue the plan upon my return from the continent. But what must I do amongst that immense wilderness, I who have no resolution, and who have not prepared myself for the enterprise by any sort of discipline amongst the Western languages? who know little of Latin, and scarce anything of Greek. A pretty confession for a young gentleman whose whole life ought to have been devoted to study. And thus the world wags. But away with this outrageous egotism. Tell me what you are doing, and what you read. What authors are your favourites, and what number

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of that venerable body you wish in the Red Sea? I shall be happy to hear from you immediately. My address Mons. W. Wordsworth, Les Trois Empereurs, à Orléans. I am no Frenchman, but I believe that is the way that a letter is addressed in France. I should have deferred this epistle till I had crossed the water, when I might have had an opportunity of giving you something new; had I not imagined you would be surprized at not hearing from me, and had I not had more time on my hands at present than I am likely to have for some time. Adieu.

Yours most affectionately and sincerely,
W. Wordsworth.

MS.
K(—)

19. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Fornsett December 7th [1791]

After so long a silence your letter, my dearest Friend, gave me uncommon satisfaction. Be assured I never have thought that there was any thing in your conduct for me to *pardon*; so much the contrary I am very conscious that if you had not even had any tolerable excuse I should have had no right to reproach you. After this declaration, however, it will be necessary to tell you that though I could not think myself ill used by your neglect of writing to me, yet it gave me much uneasiness and that I hope, my dear Jane, you will not again make me suffer so much.

I am very glad to hear that you have enjoyed yourself so much during your late visit to Leeds; I (while you have been engaged in this round of gaiety) have been sitting quietly though very happily at Fornsett, without having been at one ball, one play, one concert; indeed, I am sure I should make the worst rake in the world; I was a few days at Norwich in the course of the summer, and returned quite jaded, and as pale as ashes; I hope, notwithstanding this, that when you get me to Halif[ax] and I become a [little] more accustomed to midnight revels that I may be better able to support them. I am glad that your health improved during your stay at Leeds, and hope that it

is now quite established. Pray in your next tell me particularly how you are, and if you are at all troubled with that pain in your stomach of which you complained to me a while ago. I have not been quite so strong as, from the letter I wrote to you in the spring, you would suppose me. I have, during the whole of this summer, without being absolutely ill, been less able to support any fatigue and been more troubled with headache than I ever remember to have been, I have of late had an extreme weariness in my limbs after the most trifling exertions such as going up stairs, etc; I think, however that all my complaints are now leaving me; I am at present taking medicine; a thing so rare with me that I can hardly reconcile myself to the idea of its necessity while I cannot, in fact, say that I am ill.

Do not think that I could read the account of your raptures at York with indifference. Though I am no judge of music I am not by any means insensible to its charms, and such music as you heard, and in such a place would I think, give me more delight than any thing I can imagine except the Commemoration in Westminster Abbey. I can have a pretty good idea of your feelings on entering the Minster at York by my own when I visited King's College Chapel (at Cambridge) a building much inferior to the Minster, in grandeur and sublimity.

Since I last wrote to you, I think nothing particular has occurred relative to our affairs with Lord Lonsdale, except that we have suffered the mortification of a fresh delay. Things are now in the state in which we expected they would have been three months ago, owing to the refusal of the person pitched upon as arbitrator to act in the business. It is now in the hands of a Mr. Burrow, who began to look over the accounts last Monday and we hope will conclude the affair in a few months. God grant that he may do us justice! We need not wish for more.

My Grandmother, you may have heard, has had possession of a very handsome estate about a year.¹ She has shown us great kindness, and if her life be prolonged for a few years will have it in her power to do something handsome for us, and I

¹ Mrs. James Crackanthorpe of Newbiggin had died in 1790.

am very sure she will not neglect the opportunity. She has promised to give us five hundred pounds (a hundred a piece) the first time she receives her rents, which will be very soon. I tell you this in confidence and beg that you will not m[en]tion it to anybody; I have told no one [bu]t Mrs. Rawson, and when I communicated it to her, it was [with] a strict charge that she would not mention it to my cousins. I must not omit to tell you, as an instance of my Grandmother's particular goodness to me, that she sent me five guineas as a present in the summer along with a new gown. I fear that when at last our affairs with Lord Lonsdale (the greatest of tyrants) are settled, that the deductions must be very considerable, £5000 was the sum agreed to be due to us at Carlisle but I shall be quite happy if I can call £1000 my own, when all our possessions are collected and divided. Our several resources are these: The £500 which my Gmr is to give us, £500 which is due on account of my mother's fortune, about £200 which my Uncle Kitt owes us, and a thousand pounds at present in the hands of our guardians; and about a hundred and fifty pounds which we are to receive out of the Newbiggin estate, with what may be adjudged to us as due from Ld L. My Brother Richard has about £100 per annum, and William has received his education, for which a deduction will be made, so that I hope, unless we are treated in the most unjust manner possible, my three younger Brothers and I will have 1000£ a piece, deducting in William's share the expenses of his education. All this, too is in confidence, indeed I should think that to almost anybody but you, some apology was necessary for entering into so tedious a detail. You I know will excuse it. I hope I shall see my Brother John for a short time in a few weeks. He is to go out in the spring in the Thetis, East Indiaman. Poor Richard is quite harassed with our vexatious business with that tyrannical Lord Lonsdale; he has all the plague of it. William is, I hope, by this time arrived at Orleans, where he means to pass the winter for the purpose of learning the French Language which will qualify him for the office of travelling companion to some young gentleman if he can get recommended; it will at any rate be very useful to him, and as he can live at as little expense in France as in

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England (or nearly so), the scheme is not an ineligible one. He is at the same time engaged in the study of the Spanish Language, and if he settles in England at his return, (I mean if he has not the opportunity of becom[ing] travelling tutor) he [w]ill begin t[he] study of the oriental Languages.

. [MS. much torn here]

[] William's Muse [] [The baby] whom you inquire after as a little *Girl* is a fine stout boy, extremely healthy, and very like his sister. We expect that my Aunt will present us with another young one early in the Spring; this is rather sooner than we could have wished.

Mr Wilberforce only stayed with us a few days. We are going to establish a sort of School of Industry; my Uncle is at present in treaty about a house for the purpose; my Aunt and I are to superintend the business. The operations of my little school have been suspended ever since the birth of Christopher, as we have continually hoped to be able to go upon a more extensive plan, but have been prevented till now by not being able to procure a house proper for the purpose. Pray give my love to my Aunt and tell her I hope to hear from her very soon, if she has not already written to me. Give my kind love also to all your sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Threlkeld, and the rest of my cousins. I hope it is unnecessary to desire you to write very soon. Do not think that I propose my behaviour as an example; indeed if you had not been so long without writing to me I should have thought that I ought to apologize. Pray, my dearest Friend, do not be so long, even, as I have been, but let me hear from you, I was going to say *immediately*, but perhaps you may think me unreasonable: I will, however, venture to say, do write immediately. Believe me, my dear girl, ever affectionately yours

D. Wordsworth

My best respects to your Father and Mother. I hope they continue pretty well.

Address much torn: the words Miss Jane and the stamp Long Stratton alone remain.

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MS.
Harper.

20. W. W. to R. W.

Orleans. Decbr 19 th [1791] my address
a Mons.r Gillet du Vivier
Rue Royale
à Orleans—

Dear Brother,

I have not been able to write to you as soon as I wished in consequence of the time that my journey took me, and of a wish to defer my Letter till I could give you some account of my arrangements.—I was detained at Brighthelmstone from Tuesday¹ till Saturday Evening which time must have passed in a manner extremely disagreeable, if I had not bethought me of introducing myself to Mrs. Charlotte Smith;² she received me in the politest manner, and shewed me every possible civility—This with my best affection you will be so good as to mention to Capt. and Mrs. Wordsworth. On Sunday morning I got to Dieppe, and the same night to Rouen, where I was detained two days for the diligence, and on the Wednesday night I reached Paris, where I remained till the Monday following, and on the Tuesday arrived here just a fortnight after quitting London.

I will now give you a criterion by which you may judge of my expenses here. I had in Paris six hundred and forty three livres for 20 £—I give for my Lodging which is a very handsome apartment on the first floor, 30 Livres per month if I stay only three months, 27 if I stay six, and 24 and ten sous, viz halfpence, if I stay 8 months—My board which is in the same house with two or three officers of the Cavalry and a young Gentleman of Paris, costs me fifty Livres per month breakfast excluded. There are other little expenses which it would not be easy to sum up. But this as you will perceive is the bulk, and I think extremely reasonable considering the comfortable manner in which I live. Mrs. Smith, who was so good as to give me Letters for Paris, furnished me with one for Miss Williams, an English

¹ Tuesday, Dec. 6.

² Charlotte Smith (1749–1806), a popular poet and novelist of the day. Her *Elegiac Sonnets* (1784) passed through eleven editions. She had resided for some years in France.

Lady, who resided here lately, but was gone before I arrived. This circumstance was a considerable disappointment to me; however I have in some respects remedied it by introducing myself to a Mr Foxlow, an Englishman who has set up a Cotton manufactory here—I called upon him yesterday, and he received me very politely, he and Mrs Foxlow are going into the country for a few days, but when they return I shall I flatter myself by their means be introduced to the best society this place affords.

I have as yet no acquaintance but in the house, the young Parisian and the rest of the tables, and one Family which I find very agreeable, and with which I became acquainted by the circumstance of going to look at their Lodgings, which I should have liked extremely to have taken, but I found them too dear for me—I have passed [] of my evenings there. You []¹ heard of the news which is [] in France before this Letter [] you; that the King has been [] national assembly and that [] are going to attack the emigran[] We are all perfectly quiet here [] likely to continue so; I find [] all the people of any opulen[] aristocrates and all the oth[] democrates—I had imagined [] there were some people of wealth and circumstance favorers of the revolution, but here there is not one to be found.

I have every prospect of liking this place extremely well—the country though flat is pleasant and abounds in agreeable walks, particularly by the side of the Loire, which is a very magnificent river. I am not yet able to speak French with decent accuracy but must of course improve very rapidly. I do not intend to take a master. I think I can do really as well without one, and it would be a very considerable augmentation of my expenses.

You will give my best love to John, and repeat to Mrs and Captn Wordsworth² any parts of this letter you may think will interest them, with my kind remembrances—Compts to the Gillepins—If you see Raincock and Fisher, say I am sufficiently pleased with my situation and tell the former he shall hear from me soon.

¹ Three inches of letter torn away from this and following ten lines.

² Capt. Wordsworth: W. W.'s first cousin, the son of Richard W. of Whitehaven; like John W., he was in the East India Company's Marine Service. Raincock and Fisher were old schoolfellows of W.'s at Hawkshead.

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I have said nothing of Paris and its splendours; it is too copious a theme; beside I shall return that way and examine it much more minutely. I was at the national assembly, introduced by a member of whose acquaintance I shall profit on my return to Paris. Adieu, Adieu—

Address: Mr Wordsworth, A. Parkin's Esq, Gen. Post Off.,
London, Angleterre.

MS.

21. D. W. to R. W.

[Fornett—spring—1792]

I have just time, my dear Brother, to thank you for a very nice Beaver Hat which I assure you is a very acceptable Present and much more useful and necessary than a Habit would have been. If John is still in London tell him I wish him a good journey and that I desire he will not fail to write to me very soon after his arrival in the North. Our dear little folks were inoculated yesterday—Mary still talks about the ladder and was pleased with her Pictures. You will see my uncle in June—John would tell you about my 100£. I think I should like better to have it *nearer me*. I have not heard from Wm since John left us. Adieu my dear Brother.

Ever yours D. W.

I did not get the Hat till the coach had set off for London yesterday evening. I wish Mr Cumberledge had been doubling the Cape.

Address: Mr Wordsworth. (*Apparently by hand.*)

MS.

22. D. W. to R. W.

[Fornett—spring—1792]

My dear Brother,

I was so much hurried when I last wrote to you in the Parcel of Silk, which I sent to John, that I had hardly time to thank you for your Kindness in sending me a Hat. It was a very acceptable present; I assure you much more so than a Habit

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would be upon my going to London. I regretted a thousand Times after you left me that I had not been more positive in my Refusal to accept your offer of purchasing me one, for the more I thought of it, the more striking the Folly and Extravagance of it appeared to me, as I could purchase many things which would be much more useful to me for half the money. I again thank you for your goodness in this as well as the other instance. I received a letter from John to-day written the day after his safe arrival at Penrith, where he found my Grandmother better than she has been for some time. He received very great Civilities from Miss Griffiths during three or four Days which he spent in their House at Newcastle.

The time of our meeting, my dear Richard, draws very near, and, I assure you, I look forward to it with very sincere Pleasure; in less than three Months I hope I shall have seen you. I wish there had been any prospect of my finding Captain and Mrs Wordsworth in Town; if they are not gone, pray give my love to them. My Uncle and I had each a letter from William about a week ago. John would tell you that my Uncle offered to give him a Title for Orders; he thanked my Uncle for his Offer which he said he would accept at any time he should find most convenient. Since the arrival of these Letters my Uncle and I have had some conversation about William. He said he wondered whether Mr Robinson had any Design of placing him at Harwich, and that he wished much to know; for if it would be any object for him to get ordained immediately he would keep his Title open for him, though at the same time it would be very inconvenient for him, as he wishes to keep a Curate, and not to leave his Churches in the manner he has hitherto done to the care of the neighbouring Clergymen during his short absences from Fornsett—I told him I thought Captain Wordsworth would perhaps be able to give him Information about it if he were in Town, he replied that he would make enquiry some way or other, and he also said that he conceived it would be Mr Robinson's wish to get Mr Cowper to resign the Living, as it is impossible he can ever return to Harwich. It would be a charming thing if William could be placed there, as, though till Mr Cowper's Debts are paid, he could only enjoy the

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Profits as of a Curacy, yet it would in the end be a certain Provision—I imagine if he goes to Harwich my Uncle's Title would be unnecessary as he would most likely get one from thence. If you hear anything of Mr Robinson's Design pray let me have a few lines by my Uncle about it. Do not mention what I have said to my Uncle, as he will probably talk fully with you upon the Subject.

Our young ones have got charmingly through the small-pox—William grows a sweet Boy, and Christopher is the finest Fellow that ever was seen; he can run all about and say almost any single word. Do you think you will be able to dispose of my Treasure to any greater Advantage than in the Carlisle Bank? as I said before I should like better to have the Interest within my Reach.

I heard from Kitt about three weeks ago; he seems to think with much seriousness and at the same time with much Pleasure of coming to Cambridge.

It is so dark I can scarcely see what I write, so I bid you adieu—

I remain, dear Brother, unalterably yours

D. Wordsworth.

Fornceett. Monday evening—

I wish you would write to me.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Messrs Parkin & Lambert's, Grays Inn, London.

MS.

23. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

Fornceett. Tuesday May 6th, 1792.

My dear Friend,

I confess I have not acted perfectly right in not having written to you some time ago; my feelings, I assure you, have loudly called upon me to take up the pen without delay, but their voice has been sometimes drowned by the murmurs of laziness, who in such cases, *you* know often whispers in our ears that tomorrow will furnish us with a more convenient opportunity. Your last letter gave me particular pleasure. When you recollect how long mine had remained unanswered you will not wonder at this. In giving me an account of Miss Brachen's Dance, and the dress

of the ladies, you forget to describe your own dress. I wish much to know your height, weight etc. Do you grow fat? The last time I was weighed I found I had gained two pounds since the summer; I now reach *eight stone*. I wish you would tell me how E. Threlkeld looks, how she dresses, if she grows, if she is pretty, and if her manners in company are easy and genteel. Is Mary Grimshaw as handsome as ever and, is she good-humoured and agreeable? In short give me a slight sketch of the persons and characters of my old companions. If Peggy Taylor is with E. Threlkeld give my kind love to her, and tell her I hope she has not forgotten me. Oh my dear Jane you can have no idea how ardently I wish to see again my old companions, and above all my dear Aunt, and you the partner of all my little griefs, and all my joys. I wish I could with confidence answering yours look forward to our meeting next spring. While the time was distant, I could not help hoping that many obstacles to my wishes which then existed might in '93 be done away, but now when that year approaches I find the difficulties not diminished but increased. The birth of another little cousin has made me more necessary than ever to my Aunt, and besides I see no prospect of Miss Julia Cowper's coming to Forncett, which as I always expressed to you is the only condition upon which I can leave my Uncle and Aunt for any length of time. Thus you see, we must still look forward to an uncertain period for our meeting, but let us not fail to look forward to it. The prospect will never fail to furnish us with the most pleasing ideas, though not unmixed with melancholy. You have, no doubt, heard from my Aunt, that I expect to be in London in August on my road to Windsor, where we are to reside about three months. You will very naturally, suppose that I anticipate much pleasure from being introduced to so new a scene, but you will hardly perhaps credit me when I tell you that I look beyond the pleasures of London and Windsor, to the joy of returning again to the quiet of Forncett, better fitted to relish its enjoyments. At first you may be a little staggered with this, and perhaps even after well considering what I have said, fancy that I at least deceive myself; but when I tell you that I am perfectly happy at Forncett, that till there was a prospect of our going to Windsor I had not the

smallest desire of seeing more company than we have an opportunity of seeing at Forncett, or of living in any respect what is called a *gay life*, your surprise will vanish. I will not however, say that my sentiments, when I have tried a change of scene, may not alter with the scene, and I must also say that I am much delighted with the idea of spending a part of my time in so charming a place as Windsor. What I mean is this, that for a greater part of the year I should like to live at Forncett better than Windsor; but that I shall highly enjoy a few months of change. I promise you you shall have a full description of my manner of life and of the impression things make upon me. What will add greatly to my enjoyment in London, (where by the bye we shall only stay a week) will be the opportunity I shall have of seeing my Brother Richard, (and perhaps William), and also while I am at Windsor I may sometimes see Richard as the distance from London is not great. Since I last wrote to you my Brother John has spent four months at Forncett; he left us last Monday, and is now in London upon his road into Cumberland, and from Whitehaven he will sail to the West Indies or America, and next spring he goes out again to the East. My Brother Richard, too has been at Forncett; he brought me a very handsome gown, and has since sent me a beaver hat. William is still in France, and I begin to wish he was in England; he assures me however that he is perfectly safe, but as we hear daily accounts of insurrections and broils I cannot be quite easy; though I think he is wise enough to get out of the way of danger. Kitt will be very near Forncett in October but I fear I shall not see him till Christmas. If we had not taken our journey so soon he would have spent a little time with us before his going to Cambridge.

I am sorry I promised to transcribe some of William's compositions; as I find I have nothing worth sending that would not occupy too large a portion of my letter; but as I have made the promise I will give you a little sonnet but at the same time I charge you as you value my friendship not to read it or shew it to any one of your sisters or any other person. After such a charge you would not do it; it would be the highest breach of trust. I take the first that offers. It is only valuable and dear

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to me because the lane which gave birth to it was the favourite evening walk of my dear William and me—

Sweet was the walk along the narrow lane
At noon, the bank an[d] hedge-rows all the way
Shaggd with wild pale green tufts of fragrant hay,
Caught by the hawthorns from the loaded wain,
Which Age with many a slow stoop strove to gain ;
And Childhood, seeming still most busy, took
His little rake ; with cunning side-long look,
Sauntering to pluck the strawberries wild, unseen.
Now, too on melancholy's idol dreams
Musing, the lone spot with my soul agrees,
Quiet and dark ; for (through) the thick wove trees
Scarce peeps the curious star till solemn gleams
The clouded moon, and calls me forth to stray
Thro' tall, green, silent woods and ruins gray.

I have not chosen this sonnet because of any particular beauty it has, it was the first I laid my hands upon. You will therefore on this account, I hope, excuse its faults, and recollect at the same time that it was not intended for anybody's perusal. The gentleman who conveys this to you is Mr. Phillips who I well recollect has drawn many a dismal yawn from me by his wearisome sermons, which perhaps with a little cutting, paring and dividing might have passed off tolerably well and, perhaps, done some good; I am, however, very sure that they did not much benefit *me*. I believe that he is a good kind of man. I have never yet seen him, though he lives within two miles of us, nor I believe has my Uncle been introduced to him ; however he dines with us to-day ; and I promise myself some pleasure in talking with him about the inhabitants of Halifax. You probably may not see him but most likely he will let you know when he leaves Yorkshire ; if he does pray send me a lock of your hair.

I am very sorry to be obliged to conclude so soon—but have a letter to write to my Aunt, and I fear I cannot make it contain above two or three lines, as I find I have only a few minutes to do it in. You will therefore excuse me for bidding you good bye so soon—adieu dear Jane, Ever yours,

D. W.

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My love to your sisters and Mr. and Mrs. T.

I hope you were an *immediate* abolitionist, and are angry with the House of Commons for continuing the traffic in human flesh so long as till '96 but you will also rejoice that so *much* has been done. I hate Mr. Dundas.¹

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax. (*Not sent through the P.O.*)

K. 24. W. W. to William Mathews

Blois, May 17th [1792]

Dear Mathews,

When I look back on the length of time elapsed since my receipt of your last letter I am overwhelmed by a sense of shame which would deprive me of the courage requisite to finish this sheet did I not build upon that indulgence which always accompanies warm and sincere friendship. Your last reached me just at the moment when I was busy in preparing to quit Orleans, or certainly the sentiments which it breathes had forced from me an immediate answer. Since my arrival day after day and week after week have stolen insensibly over my head with inconceivable rapidity. I am much distressed that you have been so egregiously deceived by Mrs. D. and still more so that those infamous calumnies prevent you from taking upon you an office you are so well qualified to discharge. It gives me still more heartfelt concern to find that this slander has sunk so deep upon your spirits. Even supposing, which is not at all probable, that it should exclude you from the clerical office entirely, you certainly are furnished with talents and acquirements which, if properly made use of, will enable you to get your bread, unshackled by the necessity of professing a particular system of opinions.

You have still the hope that we may be connected in some method of obtaining an independence. I assure you I wish it as much as yourself. Nothing but resolution is necessary. The field of Letters is very extensive, and it is astonishing if we

¹ v. note to Letter 14. Dundas had been a strong opponent of Wilberforce's first bill for abolition and only reluctantly accepted gradual abolition.

cannot find some little corner, which with a little tillage will produce us enough for the necessities, nay even the comforts of life. Your residence in London gives you if you look abroad, an excellent opportunity of starting something or other. Pray be particular in your answer upon this subject. It is at present my intention to take orders, in the approaching winter or spring. My uncle the clergyman will furnish me with a title. Had it been in my power, I certainly should have wished to defer the moment. But though I may not be resident in London, I need not therefore be prevented from engaging in any literary plan, which may have the appearance of producing a decent harvest. I assure you again and again that nothing but confidence and resolution is necessary. Fluency in writing will tread fast upon the heels of practice, and elegance and strength will not be far behind. I hope you will have the goodness to write to me soon, when you will enlarge upon this head. You say you have many schemes. Submit at least a few of them to my examination. Would it not be possible for you to form an acquaintance with some of the publishing booksellers of London, from whom you might get some hints of what sort of works would be the most likely to answer?

Till within a few days I nourished the pleasing expectation of seeing Jones upon the banks of Loire. But he informs me that at the earnest request of the Bishop of Bangor he has till Michaelmas taken upon [him] the office of usher in a school which the Bishop has just built. You know well that the Welsh Bishops are the sole patrons. This circumstance will connect him with D. Warren,¹ and I hope prepare the way for a snug little Welsh living, of which our friend is certainly well deserving. Terrot some time ago addressed a letter to me at Orleans, promising me that it should soon be followed by another, in which he represented himself as stickling for preferment not in the Church or the Army, but in the Custom-house. 'Tis all well. I wish heartily he may succeed. Let me entreat you most earnestly to guard against that melancholy, which appears to be making

¹ The only Welsh bishop of the name of Warren was John, elected to the see of St. Davids in 1779, transferred to that of Bangor in 1783, and who died in 1800.—K. Perhaps D is miswritten for Dr.

daily inroads upon your happiness. Educated as you have been, you ought to be above despair. You have the happiness of being born in a free country, where every road is open, and where talents and industry are more liberally rewarded than amongst any other nation of the Universe.

You will naturally expect that writing from a country agitated by the storms of a Revolution, my letter should not be confined merely to us, and our friends. But the truth is that in London you have perhaps a better opportunity of being informed of the general concerns of France, than in a petty provincial town in the heart of the kingdom itself. The annals of the department¹ are all with which I have a better opportunity of being acquainted than you, provided you feel sufficient interest in informing yourself. The horrors excited by the relation of the events consequent upon the commencement of hostilities is general. Not but that there are men who felt a gloomy satisfaction from a measure which seemed to put the patriot army out of a possibility of success. An ignominious flight, the massacre of their general, a dance performed with savage joy round his burning body, the murder of six prisoners, are events which would have arrested the attention of the reader of the annals of Morocco, or of the most barbarous of savages. The approaching summer will undoubtedly decide the fate of France. It is almost evident that the patriot army, however numerous, will be unable [to] withstand the superior discipline of their enemies. But suppose that the German army is at the gates of Paris, what will be the consequence? It will be impossible to make any material alteration in the Constitution, impossible to reinstate the clergy in their antient guilty splendour, impossible to give an existence to the *noblesse* similar to that it before enjoyed, impossible to add much to the authority of the King: Yet there are in France some [?millions]—I speak without exaggeration—who expect that this will take place.

I shall expect your letter with impatience, though, from my general remissness, [I little deserve] this attention on your part. I shall return to England in the autumn or the beginning of winter. I am not without the expectation of meeting you, a

¹ i.e. of *Loir-et-Cher*.

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circumstance which be assured would give me the greatest pleasure, as we might then more advantageously than by letter consult upon some literary scheme, a project which I have much at heart. Adieu. I remain my dear Mathews,

Your most affectionate friend,
W. Wordsworth.

MS.

25. *W. W. to R. W.*

Dear Brother,

Blois. Sept. 3 [1792]

I received your Letter yesterday. I called upon a Banker this morning and learned from him that I should have the full value of the sum by means of one of Sir Rob. Herries bills, and that it was impracticable to remit money to Blois in the way you propose on account of its not being a commercial town—you will therefore have the goodness to procure me a note of Sir Rbt. for twenty pounds, as I have a circular Letter by me you must not send one. If the nought¹ should happen to be lost on the road it will be of no use to a person who is not furnished with a circular Letter with the same name. The note will [?] pay to me, William Wordsworth; on this account it does not appear there will be any danger in the case of its being lost. But a conversation with one of the clerks will set you at ease on this head, at the same time you ask what is the exchange and tell me in your Letter. I look forward to the time of seeing you Wilkinson and my other friends with pleasure. I am very happy you have got into Chambers, as I shall perhaps be obliged to stay a few weeks in town about my publication—you will I hope with Wilkinson's permission find me a place for a bed—Give Wilkinson my best compliments—I have apologies to make for not having written to him, as also to almost all my other friends—I rely on their indulgence—I shall be in town during the course of the month of October—Adieu, Adieu, you will send me the money immediately—W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, A. Parkin's Esq. G. P. Off. London Angleterre. [*Stamped* Blois Sept. 10. 92]

¹ An interesting misspelling, as suggesting a northern pronunciation of 'note'.

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MS.
K(—)

26. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Windsor October 16th [1792]

My dear Friend,

Though I have not replied to your last affectionate letter so soon as I ought to have done, yet I am not so culpable as you may have supposed—for I did not receive it till I had been some time at Windsor. As it had no date (it was not without signature so I will only suppose you *half* in love) I know not how long it had lain at the Post-office at Long Stratton before it came to my hands. Knowing that I am at Windsor your curiosity must be sufficiently raised; it is my part therefore to gratify it as quickly as possible but how shall I set about so complicated a task? I despair of satisfying *you* as I am sure I shall not be able to satisfy *myself*. I will, however *begin* instead of *end* with the sum total, that I am extremely happy and have enjoyed myself highly ever since my arrival at Windsor. You must set forward then, contented with this information, and, if you find my accounts so confused that you cannot guess whence I have derived my happiness be not disappointed or angry with me for the fault shall not be committed wilfully. We left Forncett on the last day of July, I travelled along with two of the maid-servants in a stage coach, and arrived at the immense city of London the following morning. My Uncle and Aunt and the children were three days upon the road, I, however, amused myself very agreeably till their arrival as my Brother was in town. I ought not perhaps to have said that I amused myself *very* agreeably as I did not like London at all, and was heartily rejoiced to quit it for Windsor exactly a week after I found myself there. I do not however consider myself as entitled to give my opinion of London or a London life as we did not go to any places of public amusement, and the weather was so hot that we could not even enjoy walking about. I contrived to see everything at one view and was highly gratified. I was at the top of Saint Paul's from whence on a clear day (which that fortunately was) you have a view of the whole city which is most magnificent. My Aunt was in London only three days. She left the children to my care and hastened forward to Windsor to put things in order for our reception. We followed her, namely

the nurse the young ones and I, on the 9th or 10th of August. If I was disappointed with London I was charmed with Windsor. The weather was delightful; we found the kindest of friends, and in short there was nothing wanting to make me completely happy. We found the Royal Family here and they staid near a fortnight after our arrival during which time they walked upon the Terrace every night. When I first set foot upon the Terrace I could scarcely persuade myself of the reality of the scene—I fancied myself treading upon fairy-ground, and that the gay company around me was brought there by enchantment. The King and several of the Princesses were advancing, the Queen's band was playing most delightfully and all around me I saw only well-dressed, smart people. What a different scene from that I had quitted a week before! The King stopped to talk with my Uncle and Aunt, and to play with the children, who though not acquainted with the new-fangled doctrine of liberty and equality, thought a king's stick as fair game as any other man's, and that princesses were not better than mere Cousin Dollys. I think it is impossible to see the King and his family at Windsor without loving them, even if you eye them with impartiality and consider them really as *man* and women not as king and princesses, but I own I am too much of an aristocrat or what you please to call me, not to reverence him because he is a monarch more than I should were he a private gentleman, and not to see with pleasure his daughters treated with more respect than ordinary people. I say it is impossible to see them *at Windsor* without loving them, because at Windsor they are seen unattended by pomp or state, and they seem so desirous to please that nothing but ill-nature or envy can help being pleased. The King's good temper shews itself in no instance so much as in his affection for children. He was quite delighted with Christopher and Mary. Mary he considers as a great beauty and desired the Duke of York to come from one side of the Terrace to the other to look at her. The first time she appeared before him she had an unbecoming and rather a shabby hat on. We had, then, got her a new one. 'Ah' says he, 'Mary that's a *pretty* hat!'

You may perhaps wish to know my opinion of the persons of the Royal Family. Do not think that I am dazzled with the

splendour of royalty when I say that I think I never saw so handsome a family; Princess Royal and Princess Mary are certainly the most beautiful, the former has all the dignity becoming her high rank with a great deal of grace. The latter has perhaps equal grace, but of a different kind. Hers are the winning graces of sixteen. Perhaps at six and twenty she will not be so fine a woman as her sister. But I think I have devoted a sufficient portion of my paper to this subject but what other shall I turn to? I am bewildered in a maze of which I can neither see beginning nor end. You have undoubtedly seen views of Windsor which have given you a much better idea of the place than I possibly can by a paper description. The Castle stands upon an eminence which rises boldly from the riv[er—I ou]ght, indeed, rather to say from the *meadows*, for the river [is a]t some little distance from the foot of the hill. It is an [im]mense building, as you will suppose when I tell you that the Terrace, which extends only along one of its sides and a part of two, is the third of a mile in length. Below the Terrace is a very beautiful park, called the *Little Park* to distinguish it from one which is on the other side and much larger. In this Little Park the Queen, when we first came, used to drive a phaeton with four white ponies attended by several people on horse-back while the King and the rest of the family were walking upon the Terrace, which had a very pretty effect seen from above. She was sometimes hid entirely by the trees, sometimes we got a faint glimpse of her or some of her party, then we had a complete view of the whole. This part of the prospect aided my imagination not a little when I was half persuaded that the scene acted upon the Terrace was the work of Fairies, for her equipage and her train of horsemen looked so diminutive that it was impossible to avoid comparing them with the descriptions one has read of Fairies travelling on fairy ground. The weather has been so bad for several weeks past as is quite mortifying. We have scarcely been able to walk at all. I however made very good use of my time while it was tolerable. I thought myself very fortunate in meeting with two young ladies who were staying at Windsor when we arrived and did not leave it till the fine weather left us. They were staying at their Uncle's (Doctor Heberden's). They were country ladies,

and of course fond of the country lady's amusement, walking. We soon became attached to each other and had several very charming little excursions into the country. They luckily, had a very agreeable young man their cousin, Mr. Heberden in the house with them and he was always at their service, therefore, we were not afraid of going far out into the country. Mrs. H. was also very kind in lending us her coach whenever they expressed a desire to go a little further than within the distance of a walk. They took me to Egham Races where we saw the Prince of Wales, Dukes of York and Clarence, and a gallant shew of company, and they took me [to] one of the most beautiful places near Windsor, the seat of General Harcourt, called St. Leonard's Hill. It is in the finest situation that can be conceived. It stands upon an eminence, and commands a noble view of Windsor Castle and of hills richly wooded. This view and a thousand others in the Park and Forest are a thousand times superior to that from the Terrace. We are as comfortably situated as possible in every respect, at Windsor. We compose, as it were, one large family in the Cloisters, for we can visit each other's houses in all weathers without hat or cloak, for [they] are surrounded by a covered passage as, I believe all cloisters are. You have been at York, and you probably saw the cloisters there which may give you some idea of the sort of gloom which we inhabit. Our immediate neighbours in the cloisters are the pleasantest people in Windsor and we visit them without form which is the mode I like best. We are at present, tis true, obliged to attend a greater number of *routs* than we like, but we hope the next time we come to steer a little more clear of them. Our assemblies began a fortnight ago. They are held every Monday. I have not yet been. The nature of our assemblies is this. There is what is called a *ball* once a month; and a card assembly which generally ends with a little dance once a week. There was a ball yesterday and my aunt was so good as to give me leave to go, but I declined it, as she would not go herself. I am to go once before I leave Windsor, and I preferred going with her to going with another lady as there was no party to be there to whom I was particularly attached. I made my *entrée* (for I was never in a public room before) at one of the Egham Race Balls. Mrs. Heberden

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was my chaperon, and [the] Miss Wollastons, her nieces, were of the party; I had the most severe tremblings and palpitations during the first dance, that can be conceived by any trembling female. My partner was a wretched one and I had not danced for five years. The latter part of the evening, however, went off very well, and after I got to dancing with Mr. Heberden with whom I was very well acquainted I felt myself quite at ease. I am called to tea, and my letter must be sent off immediately, or I cannot get it franked, but I have told you nothing—You must think me very stupid. I promise however to make you amends if you will write to me immediately, by a much longer, more circumstantial, and I hope, more entertaining letter. I hope to see Patty Ferguson in London or at Windsor in the spring, and I expect the pleasure of seeing Mr. Griffith at Windsor this week or next as, I hear, he is coming to town. Tell Mrs. Rawson I am anxious to hear from her though I am but too conscious I have no right to be urgent about it. Pray write to me soon. If you are anxious that I should make amends for this letter I am sure you will—adieu, adieu

D. Wordsworth

My brother Wm is still in France. We leave Windsor in three weeks. Excuse a thousand blunders. I have not time to look my letter over. God bless you my dearest Jane.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Hallifax. *Franked by* [Lord] Harrington [Constable of Windsor Castle.]

K(—) 27. D. W. to Correspondent Unknown

Fornsett Dec 22, 1792

... William is in London; he writes to me regularly, and is a most affectionate brother.

MS. K(—) 28. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Fornsett, February 16th [1793]

Your affectionate Letter, my dear Friend, afforded me more satisfaction than I usually receive even from your Letters, for

though there is a certain pleasure attending the Conviction that one is not forgotten by the person one loves after having long sought and wished for it, yet we have both experienced that the price at which this pleasure is purchased is much too painful; I trust, then, that in future we shall prevent each other's wishes by writing sooner than our Letters may fairly be expected, and never again put the attachment of our hearts to so severe a trial as it has often gone through. Your Letter found me happy in the society of one of my dear Brothers and one of the dearest of my Brothers. I think I have told you that Christopher and I had been separated nearly five years last Christmas; judge then of my transports at meeting him again, and judge too of my Happiness during the time we spent together when I inform you that he is a most amiable young man, sensible, affectionate, and engaging. By the bye I know not whether I have not exaggerated a little in this last article of praise, for his Modesty is so extreme as almost to amount to absolute Bashfulness, and though my Partiality for him teaches me to account this as rather a merit than otherwise (and as in a youth of eighteen nobody perhaps would *profess* to contradict me), yet it certainly makes the word *engaging* not quite proper, for it would be some time before a stranger would discover half his merits or perhaps find him out to be agreeable. He is like William: he has the same traits in his Character but less highly touched, he is not so ardent in any of his pursuits but is yet more particularly attached to the same pursuits which have so irresistible an Influence over William, which deprive him of the Power of chaining his attention to others discordant to his feelings. Christopher is no despicable Poet, but he can become a Mathematician also, he is not insensible of the Beauties of the Greek and Latin classics, or of any of the charms of elegant literature but he can draw his mind from these fascinating studies to others less alluring; he is steady and sincere in his attachments; William has both these Virtues in an eminent degree; and a sort of violence of Affection if I may so term it which demonstrates itself every moment of the Day when the Objects of his affection are present with him, in a thousand almost imperceptible attentions to their wishes, in a sort of restless watchfulness which I know not how to describe,

a Tenderness that never sleeps, and at the same time such a delicacy of manners as I have observed in few men. I hope you will one day be much better acquainted with him than you are at present, much as I have talked to you about him. I look forward with full confidence to the happiness of receiving you in my little Parsonage, I hope you will spend at least a year with me. I have laid the particular scheme of happiness for each Season. When I think of winter I hasten to furnish our little Parlour, I close the Shutters, set out the Tea-table, brighten the Fire. When our Refreshment is ended I produce our Work, and William brings his book to our Table and contributes at once to our instruction and amusement, and at intervals we lay aside the Book and each hazard our observations upon what has been read without the fear of Ridicule or Censure. We talk over past days, we do not sigh for any Pleasures beyond our humble Habitation 'The central point of all our joys'. Oh Jane! with such romantic dreams as these I amuse my fancy during many an hour which would otherwise pass heavily along, for kind as are my Uncle and Aunt, much as I love my sweet little Cousins, I cannot help heaving many a Sigh at the Reflection that I have passed one and twenty years of my Life, and that the first six years only of this time was spent in the Enjoyment of the same Pleasures that were enjoyed by my Brothers, and that I was then too young to be sensible of the Blessing. We have been endeared to each other by early misfortune—We in the same moment lost a father, a mother, a home, we have been equally deprived of our patrimony by the cruel Hand of lordly Tyranny. These afflictions have all contributed to unite us closer by the bonds of affection notwithstanding we have been compelled to spend our youth far asunder. 'We drag at each remove a lengthening Chain'¹ this idea often strikes me very forcibly. Neither absence nor Distance nor Time can ever break the Chain that links me to my Brothers. But why do I talk to you thus? Because these are the thoughts that are uppermost in my breast at the moment, and when I write to the companion of my childish Days I must write the Dictates of my Heart. In our conversations so full of tenderness I have never constrained my

¹ Goldsmith: *Traveller* 10.

sentiments; I have laid open to her the inmost Recesses of my Heart then why should I impose a restraint upon myself when I am writing to her? But is it not possible that these details of my Feelings and my little Grievs may be insipid to her? she cannot relieve them, she perhaps may think them unreasonable.

By this time, you have doubtless seen my Brother William's Poems, and they have already suffered the Lash of your Criticisms. I should be very glad if you would give me your opinion of them with the same Frankness with which I am going to give you mine. The scenes which he describes have been viewed with a Poet's eye and are pourtrayed with a Poet's pencil; and the Poems contain many passages exquisitely beautiful, but they also contain many Faults, the chief of which are Obscurity, and a too frequent use of some particular expressions and uncommon words, for instance *moveless*,¹ which he applies in a sense if not new, at least different from its ordinary one; by *moveless* when applied to the Swan he means that sort of motion which is smooth without agitation; it is a very beautiful epithet but ought to have been cautiously used, he ought at any rate only to have hazarded it once, instead of which it occurs three or four times. The word *viewless*,² also, is introduced far too often, this, though not so uncommon a word as the former ought not to have been made use of more than once or twice—I regret exceedingly that he did not submit the works to the inspection of some Friend before their Publication, and he also joins with me in this Regret. Their Faults are such as a young Poet was most likely to fall into and least likely to discover, and what the Suggestions of a Friend would easily have made him see and at once correct. It is however an error he will never fall into again, as he is well aware that he would have gained considerably more credit if the Blemishes of which I speak had been corrected. My Brother Kitt and I, while he was at Forncett,

¹ It is of interest to note that the word 'moveless' occurs twice in *The Evening Walk* of 1793, and once in *Descriptive Sketches*. All three were sooner or later removed.

² 'Viewless' is found once in *The Evening Walk* of 1793, and five times in *Descriptive Sketches*. All were subsequently removed. On the other hand, 'viewless' was introduced to *Descriptive Sketches* in 1836 at line 69.

amused ourselves by analysing every line and prepared a very bulky Criticism, which he was to transmit to William as soon as he should have [ad]ded to it the [remarks] of [] Cambridge Friends. At the conclusion of the [E]vening Walk, I think you would be pleased with those lines, 'Thus hope first pouring from her blessed horn' etc., etc. You would espy the little gilded Cottage in the Horizon, but perhaps your less gloomy imagination and your anxiety to see your Friend placed in that happy habitation might make you overlook the dark and broad Gulph between. If you have not yet seen the Poems pray do not make known my opinion of them—let them pass the fiery ordeal. Mr. Griffith desired my Br to send him half a dozen copies as soon as they should be published which I have no doubt he has done, and by his means you most probably have seen them. I am sure I ought to ask your forgiveness for dwelling thus lon[g o]n what relates merely to myself or my Brothers.

I look [? forward] to [the] latter end of next summer with a full confidence of [? meeting the] beloved Friend of my happiest Days, our conversa[tion will indeed] be interesting, we shall live over again those hours [? of which the remem]brance will ever be dear to me. Then hope itself [] of Pain—I look forward with much Pleasure to an [] [? with] Harriot, I am sure she was always a very great [] [and pro]mised to be just the Woman you describe. I am very [? sorry to hear] such an account of poor Elizabeth Threlkeld, I say [] is really much to be pitied, as I am sure the [] [? indispo]sition may in great measure be laid to the charge [] mistaken indulgence—you never described her per[son: is] she as tall as Miss Bolland? She must by this time [? have put] on the Woman's dress which I think will not suit [] her. Does she wear Powder? or in what sort of [] appear? I was much affected with the History of [] I often think of her, and with tears I have mourned her Fate. She herself perhaps does not suffer so much now as before her loss of Reason, but dreadful indeed must have been her previous sufferings driving her to such a State.

You are very good in inquiring after our little People. I wish I could introduce them to you. They are the sweetest children I ever saw—healthy and strong to a remarkable degree, and of

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course very lively. They have never known an Hour's illness since their birth except when they had the small-pox.

Give my kind love to my cousins when you see them and to Mrs. Rawson. Pray tell Mrs. R. that I wish to hear from her and to have her opinion of my Brother's Poems. If she *has* already read them, I wish you would tell her what I have said of them—if not wait till she has formed her own judgment. I am sure you must think that there are some very glaring Faults but I hope too, that you will discover many Beauties, Beauties which could only have been created by the Imagination of a *Poet*.

Remember me very affectionately to your Father and Mother, and Sisters. Tell them that I look forward with much Pleasure to seeing them again—adieu my dear Girl, Believe me unalterably yours

D. Wordsworth.

Pray write immediately.

Address: Jane Pollard, Mr Wm Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS. 29. D. W. to Jane Pollard

[Forncett, early June, 1793]

On opening this letter, my dearest Jane, you may perhaps be inclined to be angry with me for taking so small a piece of paper, and leaving even half of that unfilled, but when you are told that I write merely to inform you that I have obtained my Uncle's consent to my visiting my dear friends at Halifax and that after the month of August nothing but a call from Mr. Griffith will be necessary to make me fly to you, you will not regret that I communicate no other intelligence. I look forward to meeting again the Friend of my childhood, the companion of my pleasures 'when life reared laughing up her morning sun', in a very few months. Oh Jane! with what transport shall I embrace you! My dear Friend we shall live over again those days, and we shall anticipate future joys, domestic felicity, peace and retirement, when you visit me and find me united to my dear William. What thousands of things shall we have to say to each other! Our midnight conversations will then not be *imaginary* ones. I am sure Mrs. Rawson will invite

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you to pass some time with me at her house, and I am as sure that you will not refuse me your company. I have had no less than five letters to write to-day in consequence of my intention of visiting the North, you will not, therefore, wonder that I have on[ly the] time to give you the bare information of my happiness.

Pray write to me *immediately*. I promise you an answer and a very long one as soon as I receive your letter. Oh talk to me of your wish to see again your old companion, your *earliest* friend. Give my kindest love to Mr. and Mrs. P. and your sisters. Tell them I long to see them again

Adieu, adieu.

D. W.

Pray write *directly*,—your last letter was very long and very kind and demands a great deal in return. Do not think I consider this as a reply to it. Tell Mrs. R. I have written to Mr. Griffith at Manchester. I long to hear *when* he is likely to quit London after his next coming which will be in August or September. I wish his stay may not be long as I should like much to see you before the winter sets in. Oh how I long for a Christmas fire-side, surrounded by a circle of my old friends and companions. Pray do not make any engagements which may call you from Halifax during my stay there. I hope to be with you not less than six months—adieu my dear girl. I am in very great haste; I am going to walk to Stratton—three miles—*alone*. I shall call upon my friends the Miss Burroughses who will walk half way home with me. I am become very intimate with them. They are sweet girls.

Wednesday eveng, six o'clock.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

K(—)

30. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Fornceett, June 16th, Sunday morning [1793]

I have wished for a letter from you, my dear Friend, for these three or four days past, nay (do not condemn me as the most unreasonable of women) *expected* one. Forgive me, my dear Jane, for forming expectations which I myself must confess

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to be unreasonable, and rather impute them to my confidence in the strength of your affection for me than to vanity or any unworthy cause. I thought that you would have written by return of post, and actually made myself certain of a letter on Wednesday. I reconciled myself, however, to Wednesday's disappointment by supposing that you might have waited to see Mrs. Rawson, but Thursday, Friday and Saturday are passed without bringing me any news from Halifax. I am much disappointed, though not in the least apprehensive that my last letters to you and my aunt did not afford you both the sincerest pleasure. Why, then have I been so much disappointed that you have not assured me of it impossible as it is for any assurances even from yourselves, to strengthen my confidence in your regard for me? I know not why it is, except that one cannot hear truths of a pleasing nature repeated too often, particularly by those one loves. Let me dismiss this subject by conjuring you to write to me as soon as ever you receive this letter. I do not want any additional conviction of the warmth of your love for me; I am sure that you look forward with transports equal to my own to the time of our meeting, I am sure that the recollection of our past enjoyments in each other's society will endear to you every moment which we shall in future pass together. I am sure you will interest yourself in all my little schemes of felicity and assist me in painting scenes of happiness, happiness arising from the exercise of the social affections in retirement and rural quiet. Alas! my Friend the reality may be far distant, distant do I say? Were I certain that we should ever attain it how happy should I be? but I cannot foresee the day of my felicity, the day in which I am once more to find a home under the same roof with my Brother; all is still obscure and dark, and there is much ground to fear that my scheme may prove a shadow, a mere vision of happiness; but how can we find sweeter employment than in talking of these things? It is soon enough to admit so sad a guest as Despair when Hope refuses to attend us. You know how much more readily my heart receives the suggestions of Hope than of Despair; you know how I love to contemplate images of pleasure and how discordant it is to my nature to disturb myself

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with imaginary fears, you know in what vivid colours I can pourtray scenes of future felicity, you remember the enthusiasm with which we used to be fired when in the back-kitchen, the croft, or in any other of our favorite haunts we built our little Tower of Joy. Ah! Jane, my dear Friend let us never forget these days; the recollection of them will ever be attended with pleasure and improvement, let us when we meet talk of them for ever, let us trace the infancy of our friendship. You cannot have any idea how much I long to hear from you; I am impatient to know all your plans for our happiness when we are again united. I can scarcely believe my senses when I think that in 5 or 6 months I shall once more see my dear friends, and see them in the same places where I was formerly so happy with them. What a change shall I find in my old companions! I left you my dear Jane, in a round cap, your hair flowing about you, perhaps half the head shorter than I shall find you, 'and sweetly wild just betwixt the woman and the child'.

Oh! how I long to burst into your parlour, how I long to embrace you yet once again. Do you think you shall know me if you should happen to be looking out at the window which is on the same side with the fire-place (Oh! how often has that fire-place been surrounded by a party of happy children of whom I was not the least happy!) Do you think you should know me in crossing the top of the back-lane from the shop which was formerly Leland's to your door? Do you think you would fly to meet your old friend? Yes you would see expectation in my countenance, impatience in my steps, you would know again poor Dolly and would run as in former times to meet her. I am very impatient to hear from Mr. Griffith. I wrote to him about ten days ago, and sent my letter according to his directions, to Manchester, but I since find by my Brother William that he did not leave London so soon as he intended, but he sent me a very kind message assuring me that as soon as ever he should receive my letter he would answer it; as he was to leave London on Friday or Saturday I may fairly expect news of him from Manchester in the middle of this week. I may then perhaps know within a few weeks the day of my happiness. I hope it will not be later than the middle of November; perhaps it may be

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earlier as he talks of being in town in August or September ; we will however reckon the latest, November ; then, my dearest Jane in five months I shall see you. Oh what pleasure will it give me to meet you in the house of my dear Aunt in a situation so much more suited to her inclination and her merits than that in which I left her ! how sweetly shall we wander together along the pleasant banks of the Calder ! Am I mistaken in supposing that her house is situated near that river ? I hope I shall have your company a long time in the country, and that I shall not only enjoy it in the winter but in summer, or at least in spring, for though I shall only reach you just before the winter sets in, yet I hope to stay perhaps till June, or it may be longer, but this between ourselves, I have not yet specified any *time* to my Uncle and Aunt for my return but my Aunt very kindly said that a few months would make very little difference to her when I had once left her, and I am very sure that unless she had some very pressing occasion for me she would not hurry me home. Perhaps my Uncle Crackanthorpe will invite me into Cumberland, if so I must go, but I need not tell you that I am not *very* desirous of an invitation, and shall make my stay as short as possible, of this, however say nothing ; perhaps he may not invite me.

How I have been led away by this subject ! I have gone down two pages of my letter without telling you that my Aunt was safely delivered of a sweet little boy yesterday afternoon at two o'clock. She and the child are in as fine a way as possible. I am now in my aunt's room, she is in bed beside me, and is really so well as to make me think lying-in not half so tremendous a business as it is generally thought ; she manages matters so well that except in one instance when we remitted a little of our caution in admitting Mary into the room too often, she has never in all her lyings-in appeared to have any indisposition except a little languor and weakness. I have not been in bed last night and was up at five o'clock the preceding morning, so if my letter is a little dull, you must lay it to the account (at least in part) of a sleepy and an aching head. You will be so good as to acquaint Mrs. Rawson of the birth of our little one. I should have written to inform her of it myself if I had not

been in daily expectation of a letter from her to which I shall not fail to return an immediate answer. I hope she will talk to me of the pleasure she expects in seeing me once a[ga]in under her roof. Pray tell her that I am extremely anx[ious] [to hea]r from her, and to hear also that [my] visit to Halifax is not likely to be delayed by any engagements on [he]r part at the time when it will be convenient to my good friend Mr. Griffith to take me along with him; how mortifying would it be should I be obliged to postpone my journey on this account! I hope, however, that I should have heard before now had this been the case. I often hear from my dear Brother William, I am very anxious about him just now as he has not yet got any settled employment. He is looking out and wishing for the opportunity of engaging himself as tutor to some young gentleman, an office for which even friends less partial than I am, allow him to be particularly well qualified. You can have no idea how much I wish to introduce him to you, I am sure you would be pleased with him, he is certainly very agreeable in his manners, and he is so amiable, so good, so fond of his Sister! Oh Jane the last time we were together he won my affect[i]on to a degree which I cannot describe; his attentions to me were su[ch] as the most insensible of mortals must have been touched with, there was no pleasure that he would not have given up with joy for half an hour's conversation with me. It was in winter (at Christmas) that he was last at Forncett, and every day as soon as we rose from dinner we used to pace the gravel walk in the garden *till six o'clock* when we received a summons (which was always unwelcome) to tea. Nothing but rain or snow prevented our taking this walk. Often have I gone out when the keenest north wind has been whistling amongst the trees over our heads. I have paced that walk in the garden which will always be dear to me from the remembrance of those long, long conversations I have had upon it supported by my Brother's arm. Ah! Jane! I never thought of the cold when he was with me. I am as heretical as yourself in my opinions concerning Love and Friendship; I am very sure that love will never bind me closer to any human being than friendship binds me to you my earliest female friend, and to William my earliest and my

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dearest male friend. But enough of this subject, it is more fit for discussion in Mr. Caygill's walk than by letter. If you please we will there resume it, and if it should be cold and stormy, we shall see if female friendship is not sufficiently powerful to rob the blast of its cutting edge. I have suffered much vexation lately on account of our law-suit, but I will not enter upon so disagreeable a subject now, when I have so pleasant a prospect before me. We shall have time enough to discuss all these matters when the happiness which I expect of conversing with you is within our reach. Do you study French? I should like to talk a little broken French with you; seriously, however, I should like to *read* French with you. I have lately been *fagging* it tolerably hard. Does your Sister [Cor]delia read French much?

Give my kind love to all your [si]sters particularly Ellen and Harriot, tell them that I shall rejoice to meet them again. Poor Mary Grimshaw! I wis[h you] would tell me how she is. Give my love to all my cousins, tell them how glad I shall be to see them. Do not forget Elizabeth and Mary and Mr. and Mrs. Threlkeld.

Adieu, my dear Friend believe me with an affection which a six years absence has only contributed to strengthen and confirm, yours

D. Wordsworth

Pray write by return of post. I shall be all impatience till I get your letter.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

31. D. W. to Jane Pollard

K(—)

[Fornsett, July 10, 1793]

None of this is to be read aloud, so be upon your guard!

My Aunt is gone to take an airing with my Uncle and Mary. The evening is a lovely one, and I have strolled into a neighbouring meadow where I am enjoying the melody of birds and the busy sounds of a fine summer's evening, while my eye is gratified by a smiling prospect of cultivated fields richly

wooded, our own church, and the parsonage house. But oh how imperfect is my pleasure! I am *alone*; why are not you seated with me? and my dear William why is not he here also? I could almost fancy that I see you both near me. I have chosen a bank where I have room to spare for a resting-place for each of you. I hear *you* point out a spot where, if we could erect a little cottage and call it *our own* we should be the happiest of human beings. I see my Brother fired with the idea of leading his sister to such a retreat as Fancy ever ready at our call hastens to assist us in painting; our parlour is in a moment furnished; our garden is adorned by magic; the roses and honeysuckles spring at our command, the wood behind the house lifts at once its head and furnishes us with a winter's shelter, and a summer's noon-day shade. My dear friend I trust that ere long you will be, without the aid of imagination, the companion of my walks; perhaps in three short-*long* months we may have strolled together, and—but here let me caution you not to read any part of what I am going to write as you will betray a secret which it is of some importance not to disclose—I was going to say and my dear William may be of our party, but this is what I charge you by our friendship not to mention for reasons which I will specify before I conclude. I cannot, however, resist my desire of making *you* acquainted with the scheme which we have in agitation of bringing about a meeting at Halifax. Ever since he saw Mr. and Mrs. Rawson in London he has wished for an opportunity of accepting their very pressing invitation to their house but he has not been in the North since that time. He is now going upon a tour to the West of England along with a gentleman who was formerly a school-fellow,¹ a man of fortune, and who is to bear all the expenses of the journey and only requests the favour of William's company as he is averse to the idea of going alone. As William has not the prospect of any immediate employment I think he cannot pursue a better scheme, as his expenses will be reduced to the articles of cloaths and washing, and he is perfectly at liberty to quit his companion as soon as anything more advantageous shall offer. But this is not to my purpose; it is

¹ William Calvert.

enough for *you* that I am likely to have the happiness of introducing to you my beloved brother. You must forgive me for talking so much of him my affection hurries me on to the subject and makes me forget that you cannot be so much interested in it as I am. You do not know him; you do not know how amiable he is. Perhaps you reply 'but I know how *you* are blinded'. Well my dearest Jane, I plead guilty at once. I must be blind, he cannot be so pleasing as my fondness makes him. I am willing to allow that half the virtues with which I fancy him endowed are the creation of my love, but surely I may be excused! he was never tired of comforting his sister, he never left her in anger, he always met her with joy, he preferred her society to every other pleasure, or rather when we were so happy as to be within each other's reach he had no pleasure when we were compelled to be divided. Do not then expect too much of this brother of whom I have delighted so to talk to you; do not form your expectations from *my* account, but from that of other people. In the first place you must be with him more than once before he will be perfectly easy in conversation; in the second place his person is not in his favour, at least I should think not; but I soon ceased to discover this, nay I almost thought that the opinion which I first formed was erroneous. He is, however, certainly rather plain than otherwise, has an extremely thoughtful countenance, but when he speaks it is often lighted up with a smile which *I* think very pleasing—but enough, he is my Brother, why should *I* describe him? I shall be launching again into panegyric. I must for the present bid you adieu. The dew begins to fall so I think it not quite prudent to sit upon the grass. I will take a few turns at the bottom of the field where I have a sweet prospect, and I will adorn our little cottage. I shall almost fancy you are with me—alas! this cannot, cannot be; but I will console myself with the idea that that happy period is not far removed. I fear what I have written is quite illegible—a knee is not the most convenient writing desk. Adieu—where are you at this moment? In Whiteley wood? the old lane or Birkswood? thinking upon our past pleasures, when we used to roam in search of *bilberries* with our black porringers in our hands? or are you still more sweetly

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employed in anticipating future enjoyments in the wood near Mr. Rawson's house? I steal a few moments before I retire into my Aunt's bedroom for the night. As I am head nurse, house-keeper, tutoress of the little ones or rather superintendent of the nursery, I am at present a very busy woman and literally *steal* the moments which I employ in letter writing. I hope, however, very soon to have more leisure, but my Aunt does not gain strength so fast as I had expected; the weather is much against her, as she is languid and delicate. She had also a milk fever which has retarded her recovery considerably. She is now doing very well, goes into the air a great deal and rides out frequently in a carriage, but I am still obliged to sleep in her room, and she goes to bed so early as nine o'clock, which robs me of the most precious of my hours as I go to bed at the same time; and as she sleeps very indifferently at nights I am obliged to lie very long in the mornings for fear of disturbing her. This letter I hope to conclude in the course of three or four days. Much as I admire your large paper it is not in my power to procure any of it but I will make the best use possible of this.

Thursday morn'g. I find I have not proceeded regularly last night, and I also find that I cannot myself read what I have written without great difficulty; how you will decypher it I cannot tell. The first fault however, want of perspicuity and regularity may be remedied, as for the second I must trust to your patience for an excuse for it. I know you read my letters more than once or twice, and I hope that you will in time discover what I have meant to say. But for my journey to Halifax and my meeting there my Brother Wm, it is time I should explain myself a little more clearly. In the first place I have not heard from Mr. Griffith yet, (which has disappointed me a good deal) therefore I cannot say *when* I am to be with you. After August, however, I shall only wait his convenience, but my brother's tour will not be completed till October at which time they will perhaps make a stand in *North Wales*, from whence he can very conveniently take a trip to Halifax. It is more than two years and a half since we last saw each other and so ardent is our desire for a meeting that we are determined upon procuring to ourselves this happiness if it were even to be purchased at

the price of a journey across the Kingdom; but from North Wales into Yorkshire the distance is nothing. If therefore my brother does not meet with any employment which is likely to fix him before I go to Halifax we shall certainly meet there, but if he should be engaged we are determined to see each other at Forncett. Judge my dearest Jane of the excess of my desire to see my Brother at *Halifax* when I assure you that much as I am interested that he should be established in the world and important as is his early provision to our final interests, yet I wish that he may continue at liberty so long as to allow us an interview there. In forming this wish I have a sort of conflict within my breast, but surely I am not very culpable, as in so very short a time I shall reach my dear friends at Halifax, and as he is equally desirous for our meeting and for our meeting for a longer time than, circumstanced as we are, it would be possible for us to be together at Forncett, and besides he is impatient to be introduced into our little society at H. Here, then, the matter rests. If my Brother makes an engagement which will take him out of England or confine him to one spot for any length of time, then he is determined to come and see me at Forncett, if it be but for one day, though he has never received an invitation from my Uncle and though he can have no possible inducement but the pleasure of seeing me. You must know that this favorite brother of mine happens to be no favorite with any of his *near* relations except his Brothers by whom he is adored. I mean by John and Christopher, for Richard's disposition and his are totally different, and though they never have any quarrels yet there is not that friendship between them which can only exist where there is some similarity of taste, or sentiment or where two hearts are found to sympathize with each other in all their griefs and joys. I have not time or room to explain to you the foundation of the prejudices of my two Uncles against my dear William; the subject is an unpleasant one for a letter, it will employ us more agreeably in conversation, then, though I must confess that he has been somewhat to blame, yet I think I shall prove to you that the excuse might have been found in his natural disposition. 'In truth he was a strange and wayward wight fond of each gentle etc., etc.

That verse of Beattie's *Minstrel* always reminds me of him, and indeed the whole character of Edwin resembles much what William was when I first knew him—after my leaving Halifax—'and oft he traced the uplands etc., etc. etc.

I have been much disappointed that my Uncle has not invited Wm to Forncett, but he is no favorite with him alas! alas! I shall not however at all regret it if I have the infinitely greater happiness of meeting him at Halifax which nothing forbids me to expect. I insist upon a strict silence and pray do not read aloud one word of what I have written. I do not write to you what ought to be read by everyone—but particularly when I speak of my brothers I wish you to be silent. There is, I am sure, so much of weakness in those parts of my letters as can find an excuse only in friendship ardent as that which glows in our breasts my dear Jane, Love warm as fired our little hearts when we built our airy castles leaning upon each others arms in some corner where we have stolen from our play-fellows, and where we did not fear to hazard observations which others would have laughed at or despised as foolish and unmeaning. Oh my dear girl it was the language of the heart.

But I ramble from my subject. I am particularly desirous that nothing should be said of William's intention to visit Halifax when I am there, as though after the meeting had taken place, I should by no means wish to conceal it from my Uncle yet I should be very averse to his knowing it beforehand or even afterwards, that the scheme was a *premeditated* one. For this reason I shall not say a word of it either to Mrs. Rawson or Mr. Griffith. *You* are the only person to whom it has been mentioned. I will transcribe a passage or two from my Brother's letters which will give you a faint idea of his affection for me and of his desire to see me. The first which I shall transcribe is from the letter which he wrote to me in answer to mine informing him of my certainty of visiting Halifax but when he had no idea of making the tour into the West of England, consequently none of the possibility of meeting me at Halifax. He says after speaking much of the pleasure I might hope for from seeing you all again, 'How my dearest friend could you dare to apologize for writing me a second letter particularly

when its object was to inform me of an addition to your happiness? How much do I wish that each emotion of pleasure and pain that visits your heart should excite a similar pleasure or a similar pain within me, by that sympathy which will almost identify us when we have stolen to our little cottage! I am determined to see you as soon as ever I have entered into an engagement: immediately I will write to my uncle, and tell him that I cannot think of going any where before I have been with you. Whatever answer he gives me I certainly will make a point of once more mingling my transports with yours. Alas! my dear sister how soon must this happiness expire, yet there are moments worth ages.' In another l^r in which he informs me of his intention to accept his friend Calvert's offer he says, 'With reference to our meeting, this scheme will not at all affect it as in case of my not meeting with any employment we shall probably be in North Wales about the time of your going into Yorkshire and it will be easy for me to see you at Halifax. Oh my dear, dear sister with what transport shall I again meet you, with what rapture shall I again wear out the day in your sight. I assure you so eager is my desire to see you that all obstacles vanish. I see you in a moment running or rather flying to my arms.'

I will say nothing *to you* about the tiresome length of my details; when I write to you, my dear friend, I write what springs from the heart; I have not to wander beyond ourselves and our domestic ties for subjects of conversation, and if I have said too much you know how to forgive me. You have *sisters* but alas! you have no brothers. After the repeated cautions I have given you about not reading my letter aloud I may venture now to speak of my concern about the delicate state of your health and ur[ge you] to a journey to Scarborough and every possible means of reestablishing it. F[or my] sake my dearest Jane take care of yourself; when you are going to be gu[ilty] of any rashness think how poor Dorothy will suffer for this, think [of her] distress and mortification if though you should not be really ill, yet y[ou should] be so far indisposed as to deprive us of the enjoyment of each other's s[oc]iety in the long rambles to which the charms of the country would invite us or if we

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should be continually checked by the apprehension of going beyond your strength. I entreat you my love to think of me perpetually, to think of what will be our felicity when we are again united, if we meet with health and strength equal to our vivacity and youthful ardour of mind, think of our moonlight walks attended by my own dear William, think of our morning rambles when we shall—after having passed the night together and talked over the pleasures of the preceding evening, steal from our lodging-room, perhaps before William rises, and walk alone enjoying all the sweets of female friendship. Think of our mornings, we will work, William shall read to us. Oh my dear friend how happy we shall be! Let me then beg of you to hasten your journey to Scarborough. I certainly shall not be with you before October so you will be returned and I hope will have laid in a store of health for the winter. Alas! my dear friend how miserably would you have been disappointed in me had you not given me an opportunity of undeceiving you! You expect to find me an *accomplished* woman and I have no one acquirement to boast: I am still as I was your old friend Dolly Wordsworth—recollect what I was when we parted at your passage door, and you have an exact picture of what I am. I have nothing to recommend me to your regard but a warm honest and affectionate heart, a heart that will be for ever united to yours by the tenderest friendship, that will sympathize in all your feelings and palpitate with rapture when [I] once more throw myself into your arms. I am I dare say in person little altered, only my complexion is less healthy nay even *pallid*, what you call *wishy washy* which is, by the bye a very expressive word. But what does this all signify. I am your true friend, I do not fear that I shall lose your love though you may not be fascinated by any graces or instructed by any acquired knowledge. You will always love that ardent spirit that lively affection which first won a reciprocal affection on your part.

You are much mistaken in respect to the character of my Uncle. He is one of the best of men but extremely indolent (this pray never mention) and does not blend much instruction with his conversation, or enter much into my studies—but of this as of a thousand other things we will talk when we have the

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happiness of meeting. It is a subject I cannot enter upon now. My Aunt is without exception the best-tempered woman I know and is extremely kind to me. I will give you a recent proof of it. She gave me on Saturday 5 guineas to lay out as I think best, at the same time very kindly and delicately hinting that she thought it would be best to save it till I got to Halifax. Tell Mrs. Rawson that the expectation which I mentioned that William had formed of being engaged as tutor to Lord Belmore's son is at an end. The place was engaged before his friend's application reached Ireland. I wish you would also desire her to mention to Mr. Griffith when she writes to him that I am impatient to hear from him and have written him a second letter. Give my kindest love to all your sisters—tell Harriot I am very impatient for the arrival of that happy time when I shall become better acquainted with her. Make my best respects to your father and Mother, tell them *I am sure* they will be glad to see me. Give my love to my cousins and do not forget the family in the Northgate. Pray write to me very soon, as soon as possible. You can scarcely form an idea of the pleasure I receiv[ed] from your last long and affectionate letter. I fancied I saw your eyes speak all the emotions you there described. I fancied I heard Jane herself utter every word. This letter is so shamefully written that much as I am accustomed to write in this illegible style I am quite ashamed of it but I think if you knew all the circumstances under which it has been written and at how many different times you would hold me excused. Pray tell me honestly if you are able to read it. I would have you, however, consider this *very* bad writing as a proof of my affection for you. I would not have sent such a scrawl to anyone but you or my Brother William. Never I entreat you make it an excuse for not writing that you want time. Write as I have written this letter at twenty different sittings or standings whenever you find a moment to yourself. Perhaps you may have seen Mr. Griffith at Halifax. I long to know *when* he goes to London. Adieu my very dear friend. Love me *always* and depend upon my unalterable regard.

D. W.

Concluded Friday 12. begun Wednesday 10th.

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Pray do write immediately and give me an exact account of your health. I am impatient for a more particular relation of your complaints. I hope you will tell me you are better. Now do write immediat[ely]. Satisfy me that you are *not ill*. Adieu, adieu. God bless you.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS.

32. *D. W. to R. W.*

Fornceett August 1798.

My dear Richard,

I write to you in great distress. I have discovered this morning that I have lost my Purse containing six guineas, which is more than I was worth, as I owe a guinea and a half. Never surely was anything so unlucky. It was by mere chance that I had the money at all, or that I should be so unlucky as to put so much in my Purse. I had lent my Aunt six guineas last week; she had repaid it to me the night before last, and I, not finding it convenient to go upstairs immediately and put it in the Box where I always keep my money, except a few shillings or a guinea, put it in my Purse, and forgot to take it out again. Last night I went to Stratton, and there I suppose I lost it, as I took it out of my pocket there, and got a guinea changed. My dear Richard, it hurts me much to apply to you in this distress, but what can I do? I have not a farthing in the world. Pray be so good as to write to me by return of post, and if possible send me my allowance; at any rate write to me. I know not what I shall do. I had fancied my self so rich and I am now as poor as Job! but Riches take unto themselves wings and flee away, it is, however, no joking matter for I know not what will become of me. My Aunt gave me five guineas the other day which was the reason of my being so rich. I would not delay writing to you one post as I was fearful that, if I did, you might not be in London, and without some relief from you, and *immediate* relief, I must beg or be dunned. I have sent over to Stratton but can hear no Tidings of the Purse. With the advice of Mr Burroughes and my Aunt I shall put up a paper at the Inn door at Stratton specifying the Sum lost, and that half a guinea reward will be given in

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case the purse should be restored to the owner. Pray, my dear Brother, do not fail to write to me immediately—you may guess my distress at the loss of so much money, and I assure you the being obliged to trouble you adds to it not a little—I have already encroached too much upon your goodness. If you should see my Uncle, say nothing to him about it, as he would think me very careless, and there is still a *chance* (but alas! a very poor one, and I have no hopes) that I may find it again. I shall beg my Aunt never to tell my Uncle. Adieu dear Richard,

Believe me truly yours

D. W.

I shall send over to Stratton for your letter on *Sunday morning*—when I shall fully expect one—Friday afternoon. This loss is particularly unfortunate *now*, as I am so soon going from home.

Address: Mr. Richard Wordsworth, Staple's Inn, London.

MS.

33. *D. W. to R. W.*

Fornceett. Monday August 12th [1793]

I thank you, my dear Richard, for your Goodness in sending me a ten pound note, which I received this Morning. I have only just time, as the Man is going off immediately, to say how much I esteem myself obliged to you.

Alas! I have heard no Tidings of the lost Purse, and I have now given up all hopes. I beg you will not fail to perform your promise of writing to me soon. I shall be impatient to hear how you have been received at Newbiggin—Adieu, my dear Br.

believe me truly yours

D. Wordsworth

It is not impossible that I may see you before the End of the Summer, as our Residence at Windsor may commence in September, but this is uncertain.

Address: Mr. Richard Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

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MS.
K(—)

34. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Fornett. August 30th [1793]

I cannot give you any very satisfactory reason for my long silence, but I really have had a reason which may almost perhaps amount to an *excuse*. I have been in daily expectation of hearing from Mrs. Rawson and I was unwilling to write till I had heard from her in hopes that she might have thrown some light upon my doubts as to the time of our meeting. No letter is however arrived, and my impatience to converse with my dear Friend upon the pleasures which are in store for us will not suffer me to wait any longer. Well, August is upon the eve of expiring. Oh count, count the days, my Love till Christmas, how slowly does each day move! and yet three months and Christmas will not be here. Three months!—long, long months I measure them with a lover's scale; three months of expectation are three ages! How much do I wish that your hopes had been realized; I assure you I was grievously disappointed when I came to the end of your letter, which assured me that they were without foundation. I had already begun to contrive how I should get myself ready against so early a day; I had made the most vigorous resolutions of rising betimes in the morning and labouring as if to earn my bread. I had even gone so far as to contrive how I should get my cloaths forwarded; myself conveyed to London etc., etc. Not one difficulty presented itself to my imagination. As to getting to the coaches, that would be the easiest thing in the world, for there are two which go daily through Stratton where you know I often walk for my pleasure, but whither I could get myself conveyed in a whiskey any day; let us not, however, lament this delay, but if there should be yet another I know not how I should support it. I have not heard from Mr. Griffith since your last letter reached me. I hope, therefore, that nothing has happened which is, at present, likely to postpone his journey. I heard from his sister a few days ago who told me she was in expectation of seeing him at Newcastle this week. I have written to her today, and have said a good deal about my impatience to see

him, and my dread that a delay beyond Christmas may be productive of still further delays. I hope my letter to Miss G. will induce her Brother to write to me before it is long. I find he has deferred his Newcastle journey some time longer than was expected. May he not in consequence defer his London journey? Oh, Jane! what can be compared to the impatience of a young mind in matters in which the heart is so closely engaged? My secret still remains a secret notwithstanding you fancy it was disclosed to you by Mr. G. Do not speak of it I entreat you but you will certainly see both my Brother and myself at Christmas. When William wrote to Mr. G. it was his intention to go to Chester and probably to Manchester at the latter end of the summer; if so, certainly whether I had been at Halifax or not he would have paid his friends a visit, but he would also have made a point of seeing me there. His tour was put a stop to by an accident which might have had fatal consequences. Calvert's horse was not much accustomed to draw in a whiskey (the carriage in which they travelled) and he began to caper one day in a most terrible manner, dragged them and their vehicle into a ditch and broke it to shivers. Happily neither Mr. C. nor William were the worse but they were sufficiently cautious not to venture again in the same way; Mr. C. mounted his horse and rode into the North and William's firm friends, a pair of stout legs, supported him from Salisbury, through South into North Wales, where he is now quietly sitting down in the Vale of Clwyd, and where he will wait my arrival at Halifax and join me there, I mean if he does not enter into some engagement which may interfere with our schemes. He is staying with his friend Jones the companion of his Continental tour, and passes his time as happily as he could desire; exactly according to his taste, except alas! (ah here I sigh) that he is separated from those he loves. He says that 'their house is quite a cottage just such an one as would suit us' and oh! how sweetly situated in the most delicious of all vales, the vale of Clwyd! You can have no idea of my impatience to see this dear Brother. It is nearly three years since we parted. It will be exactly three years when we meet again. Again we shall take our wintry walks together, and the companion of my earliest

pleasures, my dear Jane will not refuse to share our happiness. She will add to it by her love for the Sister, her friendship for the Brother; this I know she will not refuse *him* for my sake whom she has loved for so many years. I am rejoiced to hear that your health is better, and that a Scarborough journey has not been judged necessary; but still I almost regret that you did not avail yourself of so pleasant an opportunity as Mrs. Threlkeld's visit to S. would have given you. It might perhaps have been the most speedy and effectual means of gaining strength. You inquire after my health. I am at present perfectly well; but at the time I complained of my pallid looks I was very much the reverse; though unable to say that I had any particular complaint, except that I was much troubled with worms, which probably might occasion the lassitude and weariness which hung upon me and absolutely deprived me of the power of exerting myself. If I walked upstairs quicker than usual I was obliged immediately to throw myself upon the bed, and my heart used to palpitate, and my limbs to ache to a most distressing degree: paradoxical however as it [may perhaps] seem to talk of being unable to make any [exertion,] and yet at the same time to be able to [walk] six miles without *very great* fatigue, yet it is true, for even when I could scarcely support my body from below stairs to my garret sleeping-room I could walk to Stratton and back again (if I walked *very slow*) without much difficulty. I am now however perfectly well, as well as ever I was in my life, and able to *run* up stairs. I have been taking medicine, which has been of considerable use to me; indeed I am still taking it, but I think my plump cheeks and healthy countenance will discard my apothecary if I do not do it by word of mouth. Do not mention this indisposition of mine to Mrs. Rawson or any of my friends; I am persuaded it was of no consequence, and relating the story the symptoms sound really alarming. I have no head-aches nor have I ever been much troubled with them since the summer that I was before unwell. I have had a most grievous misfortune; you will call me very careless; and as I have not room for the whole of my story, I hardly dare tell you a part of it. I have lost my purse containing six guineas. Judge of my distress; it was

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my all, except about 3 guineas and a half, and my *husband's* allowance was not to become due till the end of January. My letter was my little store of savings for my Halifax gaieties. It is now gone for ever. As soon as I was assured of this I wrote to my Brother Richard acquainting him with my misfortune, and (you will I am sure be pleased with this proof of his goodness) he sent me a present by the very next post of a £10 bank bill. My Brothers Richard and Christopher are both in the North, Richard is gone upon business, and Christopher to spend his summer vacation. John, poor dear fellow! is on his road to the East-Indies. I wish you would contrive to inform my Aunt that I am very desirous to hear from her, and that I beg she will tell me all she knows about Mr. Griffith's plans. Tell her I am so very anxious that I know not how I should support any longer delay. How happy should I have been had our meeting been so near as I once thought it would have been at the expiration of the month of August! How delighted should I have observed with my Friend the beauties of the sweetest of seasons, the Autumn: I grant that the sensations it excites are not so cheerful as those excited by the birth of Nature's beauties in the spring months, yet are they more congenial to my taste; the melancholy pleasure of walking in a grove or wood while the yellow leaves are showering around me, is grateful to my mind beyond even the exhilarating charms of the budding trees, while music echoes through the grove. From this assertion you will be apt to think that I have lost that cheerfulness which when you knew me seldom deserted me. Far from it my dear girl. It is true I am often sad, very, very, often, and my pleasures are often the pleasures of melancholy, but my disposition is as cheerful, nay I think I may say as *lively* as ever, but these are not subjects that can be talked of till our meeting. Alas! my dear Friend, when one is so far separated from one's dearest friends you will not find it difficult to conceive that one's pleasures must be shaded by melancholy.

Pray do write very soon, immediately. Do not mention, I entreat you again, my plan of meeting William. Give my kind love to all your family, particularly E. & H. If Mrs. R. says anything to you about expecting William this summer tell her

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pleasures; mentioned this accident to you and that he is in Wales
She perhaps may not go into the North.
for [Unsigned]

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS. 35. *D. W. to R. W.*

[Fornsett, 1793]

My dear Brother,

You will be much surprized to receive this from the Hands of my Uncle. I hope that you will come to some Plan for settling our affairs with my Uncle Crackenthorpe, and the Division of my Grandmother's Personalty. Pray talk seriously with him about these Things. What have you made of my 100£? My Uncle has remitted me the interest of it. I requested of him eight Pounds annually in addition to it, that is to make me an allowance of 12£, but he referred me to my Uncle Wordsworth saying that the Property of which my father died possessed was in his possession.

Adieu my dear Brother. Believe me very affectionately yours
D. Wordsworth.

Are you likely to come into Norfolk?

Address: Mr. Richard Wordsworth (by hand).

K. 36. *W. W. to William Mathews*

My address, Mr. Rawson's,
Mill-house, near Halifax
Febry 17 [1794]

Dear Mathews,

I am overjoyed to hear from you again, and to perceive that your regard for me is undiminished. I quitted Keswick some time since, and have been moving backwards¹ and forwards, which prevented me receiving your very kind letter, as I ought to have done. I am now staying with a gentleman who married a relation of mine, with whom my sister was brought up; my

¹ He was at Whitehaven, Christmas 1793.

sister is under the same roof with me, and indeed it was to see her that I came into this country. When I received your letter in France informing me of your engagement, and of the prospect of your making a voyage up the Mediterranean, I flattered myself that you would always have reason to look back with pleasure on the time when you undertook that office; and in my letter in answer, (which I dispatched by return of post though you have never received it,) I spoke with great confidence of the probability that this might be a method of securing you an independence. I am sorry to have been disappointed; but I find it easy to conceive that with such characters your situation was a most painful one. I approve much of your change of profession; all professions I think are attended with great inconveniences, but that of the priesthood with the most. Tell me on what terms you now study, or how you mean to practise.

You have learned from Myers¹ that, since I had the pleasure of seeing you, I have done nothing and still continue to do nothing. What is to become of me I know not. I cannot bow down my mind to take orders, and as for the law I have neither strength of mind, purse, or constitution, to engage in that pursuit.

It gives me great pleasure to hear you speak in such affectionate terms of our former conversations. Such language adds to the desire which the recollection of those enjoyments inspires me with of repeating them. I am happy to hear that you are master of Spanish and Portuguese. Of Spanish I have read none these three years, and little Italian; but of French I esteem myself a tolerable master. My Italian studies I am going to resume immediately, as it is my intention to instruct my sister in that language.

Have you heard anything of Terrot? where is he, and what doing? If you write to him remember me affectionately to him. I know [not] when I am likely to see you, as I am uncertain when I shall be in London; nor do I think it worth while to take my master's degree next summer. As an honour you know it is nothing, and in a pecuniary light it would be of no use to me; on the contrary, it would cost me a good deal of money.

¹ John Myers, W.'s cousin (son of Anne M. his father's sister). He was a fellow student with him at St. John's, Cambridge. He died in 1821.

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Pray give my best love to Myers, and in your next, which I shall expect as soon as you have leisure, favour me with his address, and I will write to him. I need not dwell on the pleasure I should have in meeting you, in reading with you the compositions of which you speak, in giving a second birth to [our] former conversations. What rema[rks] do you make on the Portuguese? in what state is knowledge with them? and have the principles of free government any advocate there? or is Liberty a sound, of which they have never heard? Are they so debased by superstition as we are told, or are they improving in anything? I should wish much to hear of those things, and to know what made the most impression upon you, whilst amongst them. Adieu. Pray write to me soon, I regret much having received your letter so late as I did. Be assured that I shall always think of you, with tenderness and affection.

W. Wordsworth.

M.
K.

37. *D. W. to ?*

[April, 1794.]

After having enjoyed the company of my brother William at Halifax, we set forward by coach towards Whitehaven, and thence to Kendal. I walked with my brother at my side, from Kendal to Grasmere, eighteen miles, and afterwards from Grasmere to Keswick, fifteen miles, through the most delightful country that was ever seen. We are now at a farm-house, about half a mile from Keswick. When I came, I intended to stay only a few days; but the country is so delightful, and, above all, I have so full an enjoyment of my brother's company, that I have determined to stay a few weeks longer. After I leave Windy Brow (this is the name of the farm-house), I shall proceed to Whitehaven.

MS.
K(—)

38. *D. W. to Jane Pollard*

Windy Brow Near Keswick [April, 1794]

My dear Jane,

No doubt you have expected to hear from me before this time, and indeed I have often felt that it was my duty to write

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to you and that if I had once set about it I should have great pleasure in doing it; yet something has presented itself to be done which did not, in its commencement, require the same exertion; therefore I easily persuaded myself to put off the letter till another day. You would hear from my aunt of my wonderful prowess in the walking way, and of my safe arrival at Grasmere. Since I wrote to her I walked from Grasmere to Keswick, 13 miles, and at Keswick I still remain. I have been so much delighted with the people of this house, with its situation, with the cheapness of living, and above all with the opportunity which I have of enjoying my brother's company that, though at my arrival I only talked of staying a few days, I have already been here above a fortnight and I intend staying still a few weeks longer—perhaps three or four. You cannot conceive anything more delightful than the situation of this house. It stands upon the top of a very steep bank, which rises in a direction nearly perpendicular from a dashing stream below. From the window of the room where I write I have a prospect of the road winding along the opposite banks of this river, of a part of the lake of Keswick, and of the town, and towering above the town a woody steep of a very considerable height whose summit is a long range of silver rocks. This is the view from the house, but a hundred yards above, it is impossible to describe its grandeur. There is a natural terrace along the side of the mountain which shelters Windy Brow, whence we command a view of the whole vale of Keswick (the Vale of Elysium, as Mr. Gray¹ calls it). This vale is terminated at one end by a huge pile of grand mountains in whose lap the lovely lake of Derwent is placed, at the other end by the lake of Bassenthwaite, on one side Skiddaw towers sublime and on the other a range of mountains not of equal size but of much grandeur, and the middle part of the vale is of beautiful cultivated grounds interspersed with cottages and watered by a winding stream which runs between the lakes of Derwent and Bassenthwaite. I have never been more delighted with the manners of any people than of the family under whose roof I am at present. They are the

¹ v. Gray's *Journal in the Lakes*, under date Oct. 2, 1769. The *Journal* was first published by Mason in 1775.

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most honest cleanly sensible people I ever saw in their rank of life—and I think I may safely affirm, *happier* than any body I know. They are contented with a supply of the bare necessities of life, are active and industrious and declare with simple frankness unmixed with ostentation that they prefer their cottage at Windy Brow to any of the showy edifices in the neighbourhood, and that they believe there is not to be found in the whole vale a happier family than they are. They are fond of reading, and reason not indifferently upon what they read. We have a neat parlour to ourselves which Mr. Calvert has fitted up for his own use and the lodging-rooms are very comfortable. Till my brother gets some employment he will lodge here. Mr. Calvert is not now at Windy Brow as you will suppose. We please ourselves in calculating from our present expenses for how very small a sum we could live. We find our own food, our breakfast and supper are of milk and our dinner chiefly of potatoes and we drink no tea. We have received great civilities from many very pleasant families, particularly from a Mrs. Spedding of Armathwaite, at whose house you may recollect my Brother was staying before he went to Halifax. Mrs. Spedding has two daughters who are in every respect charming women. They are women whose acquaintance [I am] very desirous of cultivating. They have read mu[ch] and are amiable and engaging in their manners. They live in the most beautiful place that ever was beheld. We have been staying there three nights and should have staid longer if Mrs. Spedding had not been going from home. She has pressed me very much to go and spend some time with them before I leave the country which I hope I shall have it in my power to do. William is very intimate with her oldest son and has always received great kindness from the family.

I suppose you have, by this time, left Bradford and got into your new house, how highly you must enjoy yourselves in that airy situation contrasting it with the Southgate. Give my love to Mrs. Rawson. Tell her I will write to her soon. I received her letter to day. Give my love to the Fergusons, Threlkelds, and all your sisters, and your Mother. In particular remember me to Ellen and Harriot. I had a letter from Windsor on Saturday. My

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Aunt tells me she was engaged every day the week before she wrote to me, and that she is in a perpetual bustle. Again I ought to apologize for this sad scrawling letter—and I would apologise to anyone but you. Adieu, dear Jane believe me truly yours

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Mr. Wm. Pollard's, Halifax, Yorkshire.

MS. 39. D. W. to Mrs. Crackanthorp

K.

Windy Brow April 21st [1794]

My dear Aunt,

I should have answered your letter immediately after the receipt of it, if I had not been upon the point of setting forward to Mrs. Spedding's of Armathwaite where I have been spending three days. I am much obliged to you for the frankness with which you have expressed your sentiments upon my conduct and am at the same time extremely sorry that you should think it so severely to be condemned. As you have not sufficiently developed the reasons of your censure I have endeavoured to discover them, and I confess no other possible objections against my continuing here a few weeks longer suggest themselves, except the *expence* and that you may suppose me to be in an unprotected situation. As to the former of these objections I reply that I drink no tea, that my supper and breakfast are of bread and milk and my dinner chiefly of potatoes from choice. In answer to the second of these suggestions, namely, that I may be supposed to be in an unprotected situation, I affirm that I consider the character and virtues of my brother as a sufficient protection, and besides I am convinced that there is no place in the world in which a good and virtuous young woman would be more likely to continue good and virtuous than under the roof of these honest, worthy, uncorrupted people so that any guardianship beyond theirs, I should think altogether unnecessary.

I cannot pass unnoticed that part of your letter in which you speak of my 'rambling about the country on foot'. So far from considering this as a matter of condemnation, I rather thought it would have given my friends pleasure to hear that I had courage

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to make use of the strength with which nature has endowed me, when it not only procured me infinitely more pleasure than I should have received from sitting in a post chaise—but was also the means of saving me at least thirty shillings.

In mentioning the inducements which I have to stay at Windy Brow a few weeks longer it will be unnecessary to speak of the beauty of the country or the pleasantness of the season. To these are added the society of several of my brother's friends from whom I have received the most friendly attentions and above all the society of my brother. I am now twenty-two years of age and such have been the circumstances of my life that I may be said to have enjoyed his company only for a *very few* months. An opportunity now presents itself of obtaining this satisfaction, an opportunity which I could not see pass from me without unspeakable pain. Besides I not only derive much pleasure but much improvement from my brother's society. I have regained all the knowledge I had of the French language some years ago, and have added considerably to it, and I have now begun reading Italian, of which I expect to have soon gained a sufficient knowledge to receive much entertainment and advantage from it. I am much obliged to you and my uncle for your kind invitation which I shall accept with great pleasure at my return from Whitehaven. I have received the kindest civilities from Mrs Spedding of Armathwaite. She has made me promise that if it is in my power I will spend a little time with her [] I know of nothing that would make me more happy than to cultivate the acquaintance of the Miss Speddings who are most amiable women. I beg my love to my Uncle and the children, and my compliments to Miss Cust. Believe me, my dear Aunt affectionately yours

D. Wordsworth

Address: Mrs. Crackanthorp, Penrith.

K. 40. *W. W. to William Mathews*

Whitehaven, Friday, May 23, [1794.]

Dear Mathews,

I am sorry I did not receive your's of the 11th till yesterday, or I certainly should have answered it sooner. I am very happy

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to find that your regard for me continues unimpaired, and that you wish so ardently to see me. I assure you it would give me great pleasure to cultivate your friendship in person, but I really cannot on any account venture to London unless upon the certainty of a regular income. Living in London must always be expensive, however frugal you may be. As to the article of eating, that is not much; but dress, and lodging, are *extremely* expensive. But I must do something to maintain myself, even in this country. You mention the possibility of setting on foot a monthly Miscellany from which some emolument might be drawn. I wish, I assure you most heartily, to be engaged in something of that kind; and if you could depend on the talents, and above all the industry of the young man you speak of, I think we three would be quite sufficient with our best exertions to keep alive such a publication. But, as you say, how to set it afloat!

I am so poor that I could not advance anything, and I am afraid you are equally unable to contribute in that way! Perhaps however this might be got over if we could be sure of the patronage of the public. I do not see that my being in the country would have any tendency to diminish the number or deduct from the value of my communications. It would only prevent me from officiating as an editor; and, as you are I suppose both resident in Town, that circumstance would not be of much consequence. I wish much to hear further from you on this head, as I think if we could once raise a work of this kind into any reputation it would really be of consequence to us both. But much is to be attended to before we enter the field. What class of readers ought we to aim at procuring; in what do we, each of us, suppose ourselves the most able, either to entertain or instruct?

Of each other's political sentiments we ought not to be ignorant; and here at the very threshold I solemnly affirm that in no writings of mine will I ever admit of any sentiment which can have the least tendency to induce my readers to suppose that the doctrines which are now enforced by banishment, imprisonment, &c, &c, are other than pregnant with every species of misery. You know perhaps already that I am of that

odious class of men called democrats, and of that class I shall for ever continue. In a work like that of which we are speaking, it will be impossible, (and indeed it would render our publication worthless, were we to attempt it,) not to inculcate principles of government and forms of social order of one kind or another. I have therefore thought it proper to say this much in order that if your sentiments—or those of our coadjutor—are dissimilar to mine, we may drop the scheme at once. Besides essays on Morals and Politics, I think I could communicate critical remarks upon Poetry, &c, &c, upon the arts of Painting, Gardening, and other subjects of amusement. But I should principally wish our attention to be fixed upon Life and Manners, and to make our publication a vehicle of sound and exalted Morality.

All the periodical Miscellanies that I am acquainted with, except one or two of the Reviews, appear to be written to maintain the existence of prejudice and to disseminate error. To such purposes I have already said I will not prostitute my pen. Besides were we ignorant or wicked enough to be so employed, in our views of pecuniary advantage (from the public at least) we should be disappointed. But on the subject of this scheme I shall be happy to give my ideas at large, as soon as I have received yours, and those of your friend. I repeat it, I think if we are determined to be industrious, we are a sufficient number for any purpose of that kind. I beg therefore I may hear from you immediately, and at great length, explaining your ideas upon our plan. I should also be happy to hear from your friend on the same subject. I am at present nearly quite at leisure, so that with industry I think I can perform my share. I say nearly at leisure, for I am not quite so; as I am correcting and considerably adding to those poems which I published in your absence.¹ It was with great reluctance I huddled up those two little works, and sent them into the world in so imperfect a state. But as I had done nothing by which to distinguish myself at the University, I thought these little things might shew that I could do something. They have been treated with unmerited contempt by some of the periodical publications, and

¹ *An Evening Walk, and Descriptive Sketches* (1793).

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others have spoken in higher terms of them than they deserve. I have another poem¹ written last summer, ready for the press, though I certainly should not publish it unless I hoped to derive from it some pecuniary recompence. As I am speaking on this subject, pray let me request you to have the goodness to call on Johnson, my publisher, and ask him if he ever sells any of those poems, and what number he thinks are yet on his hands. This will be doing me a great favor. I ought to have thanked you long since for your account of your plans. I wish you most heartily all the success which you deserve. Pray, in what print are you engaged? I am yours most affectionately.

W. Wordsworth.

Do write as soon as possible. My address, R. Wordsworth's, Esq, Whitehaven. This pen and ink are so bad, I can scarce write with them at all.

MS.

41. D. W. to R. W.²

Whitehaven May 28th 1794

My dear Richard

William has received your letter enclosing a ten pound note for me for which I am much obliged to you. I wish I could give you a better account of the state of my Uncle's health than it is in my power to give you. He is however somewhat better than when William wrote to you, but I fear that if he gets so well as to continue some time longer he will never enjoy a *good* state of health. He is still at Branthwaite; I think his continuing there will give him the only chance for a recovery.

I think I can answer for William's caution about expressing his political opinions. He is very cautious and seems well aware of the dangers of a contrary conduct. He intends staying at

¹ *Guilt and Sorrow; or Incidents upon Salisbury Plain.*

² In answer to a letter from R. to W., urging W. to 'be cautious in writing or expressing your political opinions. By the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Acts the Ministers have great powers', and saying of their lawsuit with Lord Lonsdale 'I see no end to the business. I have always avoided writing and speaking upon this subject, because his lordship has so many spies in every part of the country. You may read this letter to Dolly, afterwards it may be as well to burn it.'

Keswick till he gets some employment which may make it necessary for him to go elsewhere. I shall stay at Whitehaven about three weeks longer and shall go to Rampside for a fortnight when I leave this place. Robinson and William will walk by my side to Broughton, and I shall ride upon my Uncle's horse: at Broughton Mr. Barker¹ will meet us and convey me to Rampside. I intend after this to spend a few weeks at Armathwaite, I have received the kindest invitations from Mrs. Spedding, and the most friendly attentions. After this I shall go to Newbiggin for a short time and then proceed to Halifax to conclude my visit there.

Mrs. Wordsworth has heard nothing from the Captain lately, but she has reason to think it probable that he may arrive in England about the month of July. She will be in London before the end of June.

As to our affairs I can only say that I am anxious in the extreme that they should be brought into a way of being terminated, and I have no doubt but that you will be watchful and active. Above all things let me advise you to get my Uncle Crackanthorpe's accounts² immediately, it does not appear to me that anything can or ought to prevent his sending them in without delay. Use all possible means to get this brought about, urge him, and write to him till it is done, and let me know how things stand, it behoves you to be vigilant. Our affair with Lord L. appears to become daily more distressing and intricate. At present it cannot be advancing one step therefore the necessity of a speedy settlement of all other accounts cannot be too strongly urged to you. When this is done you must consult with those who are most able to advise you as to your future proceedings. Here it is said that nothing can be done without applying to the House of Lords—Do not you think that by going to Lord Lonsdale himself you might *gain something*?

Let me again entreat you to bring my Uncle Crackanthorpe to a settlement. It *must* be done, and without some pains on your side he will delay. How long is it since he made you a

¹ Robinson W.'s brother-in-law.

² Uncle C., with his co-guardian Richard W. (senior), had administered that portion of the estate of John W. not in the hands of Lord Lonsdale.

MAY 1794

promise of settling with us? If it is so long as that before this time you might have expected his performance of it—pray write to him immediately—

Mrs. Wordsworth begs her love to you. I am very happy at her house for she is a sweet woman, and I have my time perfectly at my own disposal—William joins with me in best love to you. I am, dear Richard

Your affectionate Sister
D. Wordsworth

My Uncle's complaints are the jaundice, and cough, and swellings of his legs which is thought to be a symptom of a dropsy—We have a worse account of him today—The physicians here seem to have no hopes. They are going to state his case to Dr. Monro. Everyone here is rejoiced at the good news of Mr. Littledale's having gained his cause. I wish ours had been pursued with equal vigour. Let me entreat you again, my dear Richard, to bring my Uncle Crackanthorpe to an immediate settlement—pester him with letters till it is done—These things make me very uneasy—

Address: Mr. Richard Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

K. 42. *W. W. to W. Mathews*

Whitehaven, Sunday, June, [1794]

Dear Mathews,

Your packet of letters, received yesterday night, relieved me from great anxiety. I began to be apprehensive that our intended scheme was falling to the ground, my fears, however, are now done away. This letter I address to you and your friend to whom the satisfaction I have already expressed, will, I have no doubt, be sufficient thanks for his ready compliance with my request. I read the explicit avowal of your political sentiments with great pleasure; any comments which I have to make upon it will be expressed in the best manner by a similar declaration of my own opinions. I disapprove of monarchical and aristocratical governments, however modified. Hereditary distinctions, and privileged orders of every species, I think must

necessarily counteract the progress of human improvement: hence it follows that I am not amongst the admirers of the British Constitution. Now, there are two causes which appear to me to be accomplishing the subversion of this Constitution; first, the infatuation, profligacy, and extravagance of men in power; and secondly, the changes of opinion respecting matters of Government, which within these few years have rapidly taken place in the minds of speculative men.

The operation of the former of these causes I would spare no exertion to diminish, to the latter I would give every additional energy in my power. I conceive that a more excellent system of civil policy might be established amongst us; yet, in my ardour to attain the goal, I do not forget the nature of the ground where the race is to be run. The destruction of those Institutions which I condemn appears to me to be hastening on too rapidly. I recoil from the bare idea of a Revolution; yet, if our conduct with reference both to foreign and domestic policy continues such as it has been for the last two years, how is that dreadful event to be averted? Aware of the difficulty of this, it seems to me that a writer who has the welfare of mankind at heart should call forth his best exertions to convince the people that they can only be preserved from a convulsion by economy in the administration of the public purse, and a gradual and constant reform of those abuses which, if left to themselves, may grow to such a height as to render even a Revolution desirable. There is a further duty incumbent upon every enlightened friend of mankind. He should let slip no opportunity of explaining and enforcing those general principles of the social order, which are applicable to all times and to all places; he should diffuse by every method a knowledge of those rules of political justice, from which the further any government deviates the more effectually must it defeat the object for which government was ordained. A knowledge of these rules cannot but lead to good; they include an entire preservative from despotism. They will guide the hand of Reform, and if a revolution must afflict us, they alone can mitigate its horrors and establish freedom with tranquility.

After this need I add that I am a determined enemy to every

species of violence? I see no connection, but what the obstinacy of pride and ignorance renders necessary, between justice and the sword, between reason and bonds. I deplore the miserable situation of the French; and think we can only be guarded from the same scourge by the undaunted efforts of good men in propagating with unremitting activity those doctrines, which long and severe meditation has taught them are essential to the welfare of mankind. Freedom of inquiry is all that I wish for; let nothing be deemed too sacred for investigation. Rather than restrain the liberty of the press I would suffer the most atrocious doctrines to be recommended: let the field be open and unencumbered, and truth must be victorious. On this subject I think I have said enough, if it be not necessary to add that, when I observe the people should be enlightened upon the subject of politics, I severely condemn all inflammatory addresses to the passions of men, even when it is intended to direct those passions to a good purpose. I know that the multitude walk in darkness. I would put into each man's hand a lantern to guide him, and not have him to set out upon his journey depending for illumination on abortive flashes of lightning, or the coruscations of transitory meteors.

To come now to particulars. I cannot say that the title you have chosen pleases me. It seems too common to attract attention. Do you think any objection can be made to the following '*The Philanthropist, a monthly Miscellany*'? This title I think would be noticed. It includes everything that can instruct and amuse mankind; and, if we exert ourselves, I doubt not that we shall be able to satisfy the expectations it will raise. Here let me observe that whatever plans I approve or disapprove I neither wish to be adopted or rejected on the strength of my opinion. As to the choice of matter, and its distribution, I see nothing to object to what you have said upon that subject. I think with you, that each number should open with a topic of general politics. Here it will be proper to give a perspicuous statement of the most important occurrences, not overburdened with trite reflections, yet accompanied with such remarks as may forcibly illustrate the tendency of particular doctrines of government. Next should follow essays upon Morals, and

Manners, and Institutions whether social or political. These several departments entirely for such as read for instruction.

Next should come essays partly for instruction and partly for amusement, such as biographical papers exhibiting the characters and opinions of eminent men, particularly those distinguished for their exertions in the cause of liberty, as Turgot, Milton, Sydney, Machiavel, Bucaria, &c. &c. &c. It would perhaps be advisable that these should, as much as possible form a Series, exhibiting the advancement of the human mind in moral knowledge. In this department will be included essays of taste and criticism, and works of imagination and fiction. Next should come a review of those publications which are particularly characterized by inculcating recommendations of benevolence and philanthropy. Some Poetry we should have. For this part of our plan we ought to have no dependence on original communications. The trash which infests the magazines strongly impresses the justice of this remark ; from new poetical publications of merit, and such *old* ones as are not generally known, the pages allotted to verse may generally be filled. Next come Parliamentary Debates, detailed as you have specified, and such State-Papers as are of importance.

As to our readers, you think that we should endeavour to obtain as great a variety as possible. You cannot, however, be ignorant that amongst the partizans of this war, and of the suspension of the *habeas corpus* act, amongst the mighty class of selfish alarmists, we cannot obtain a single friend. We must then look for protection entirely amongst the dispassionate advocates of liberty and discussion. These, whether male or female, we must either amuse or instruct ; nor will our end be fully obtained unless we do both. The clergy of the Church of England are a body from which periodical publications derive great patronage: they however will turn from us. At the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, amongst the young men, we shall not look in vain for encouragement. The dissenters, in general, are not rich ; but in every town of any size there are some who would receive a work like ours with pleasure. I entirely approve of what you say on the subject of Ireland, and think it very proper that an agent should be appointed in Dublin to

disseminate the impression. It would be well if either of you have any friends there, to whom you could write soliciting their recommendation. Indeed it would be very desirable to endeavour to have, in each considerable town of Great Britain and Ireland, a person to introduce the publication into notice. To this purpose, when it is further advanced, I shall exert myself amongst all my friends.

As to coming to Town this step I must at present decline. I have a friend in the country¹ who has offered me a share of his income. It would be using him very ill to run the risk of destroying my usefulness, by precipitating myself into distress and poverty, at the time when he is so ready to support me in a situation wherein I feel I can be of some little service to my fellowmen. Hereafter, if our exertions are sufficient to support us by residing in London, perhaps I may be enabled to prosecute my share of the exertion with greater vigour. While I continue in the country, it will not be easy for me to be of much use, either in the first or last province of the work. In every other I promise my best exertions. I have not been much used to composition of any kind, particularly in prose; my style therefore may frequently want fluency, and sometimes perhaps perspicuity, but these defects will gradually wear off; an ardent wish to promote the welfare of mankind will preserve me from sinking under them. Both of you appear much engaged. Will it not be necessary to free yourselves from some of those occupations to which your time is at present devoted? Here you must be the sole judges. As to money, I have not a single sixpence of my own to advance; but I have several friends who, though not rich, I daresay would be willing to lend me assistance.

The first thing now to be done is, I think, (after establishing a cover correspondence²) to communicate to each other a sufficient portion of matter to compose at least two numbers—I mean of general, not temporary matter—which must depend upon circumstances as they occur. I mention this, both because each would be a better judge of his strength, and because such

¹ Raisley Calvert.

² By having their folded covers to hold MS. franked for free transmission by post.—K.

papers may be circulated in manuscript amongst my friends in this part of the world as specimens of the intended work. After this is done, we should then see how much money each of us can raise, what will be the expense of advertising and printing a certain number of copies, and the sale of what number of copies would indemnify us. You have probably both had more experience amongst booksellers than myself, and may be better able to judge how far our publisher may be induced to circulate the work with additional spirit, if he himself participates in the profits. For my part I should wish that if possible it were printed entirely at our own risk, and for our own emolument. But the final decision on all these matters I leave to you. We should by no means *promise* any embellishments; and, as our work will relate rather to moral than natural knowledge, there will not often be occasion for them. I am far from thinking that we should not vary it by occasionally introducing topics of physical science. They should however be as popular, and as generally interesting as we can collect. We should print in the review form.

If you think that by going over to Dublin I could transact any business relative to the publication in a better manner than it could be done by letter, though I have no friends there, I would willingly undertake the voyage, which may be done at any time from this place. Probably I have omitted many things which I ought to have adverted to, you will therefore excuse the little method pursued in the following remarks, which I shall set down as they arise, lest in attempting to arrange them they should slip from my memory. I think it essential that we should not have the least reliance on any accidental assistance; at the same time we should by no means neglect to stir up our friends to favour us with any papers which a wish to add to the stock of general knowledge may induce them to write. Would it not be advisable that each of us should draw up a prospectus of our object and plan, and from the whole may be composed one which we should not delay to submit to the public? Of this prospectus, when finished, the style should be particularly polished and perspicuous.

It would contribute much to render our work interesting,

JUNE 1794

could we have any foreign correspondents informing us of the progress of knowledge in the different metropolises of Europe, and of those new publications, which either attract or merit attention. These writings our knowledge of languages would enable us to peruse, and it would be well to extract from them the parts distinguished by particular excellence. It would be well also if you could procure a perusal of the French monitors; for while we expressed our detestation of the execrable measures pursued in France, we should belie our title if we did not hold up to the approbation of the world such of their regulations and decrees as are dictated by the spirit of Philosophy. We should give also an accurate account of the Polish Revolution, and purify it from those infamous representations which ministerial hirelings have thrown over it. I am not acquainted with the German language, a circumstance which I greatly regret, as the vast tract of country where that tongue is spoken cannot but produce daily performances which ought to be known amongst us. I wish you would answer this letter, as soon as possible; and at great length. I hope you will be able to procure covers, as in this remote part I cannot at present. You would do well to enclose me one for yourselves fixing the date two or three days after the time when I shall have received yours. I am, with great respect and esteem, your fellow labourer and friend,

W. Wordsworth.

MS.
K.

43. *W. W. to William Calvert*

Keswick, October 1st, [1794]

Dear Calvert,

I returned to Keswick last Sunday having been detained in Lancashire¹ much longer than I expected. I found your brother worse than when I left Keswick, but a good deal better than he had been some weeks before. He is determined to set off for Lisbon, but any person in his state of health must recoil from the idea of going so far alone, particularly into a country of whose language he is ignorant. I have reflected upon this

¹ Probably at Rampside, on the coast opposite to Peels Castle.

OCTOBER 1794

myself, and have been induced to speak with him about the possibility of your giving him as much pecuniary assistance as would enable me to accompany him thither, and stay with him till his health is re-established. I would then return and leave him there. This I think, if possible, you ought to do. You see I speak to you as a friend. But then perhaps your present expenses may render it difficult. Would it not exalt you in your own esteem to retrench a little for so excellent a purpose? Reflecting that his return is uncertain your brother requests me to inform you that he has drawn out his will, which he means to get executed in London. The purport of his will is to leave you all his property real and personal chargeable with a legacy of £600 to me, in case that on enquiry into the state of our affairs in London he should think it advisable to do so. It is at my request that this information is communicated to you, and I have no doubt but that you will do both him and myself the justice to hear this mark of his approbation of me without your good opinion of either of us being at all diminished by it. If you could come over yourself it would be much the best. At all events fail not to write by return of post, as the sooner your brother gets off the better. He will depart immediately after hearing from you.

I am dear Calvert,

Your very affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Ensign Calvert, Tynemouth Barracks, Northumberland.

K. 44. *W. W. to William Mathews*

Keswick, November 7th, 1794.

Dear Mathews,

The more nearly we approach the time fixed for action, the more strongly was I persuaded that we should decline the field. I was not therefore either much surprized, or mortified, at the contents of your letter. It is true my distance from Town, unless we were once set forward, could not but be a great obstacle in our way; and at present it is absolutely out of my power to leave this place. My friend, of whom I have spoken to you, has every symptom of a confirmed consumption of the lungs,

and I cannot think of quitting him in his present debilitated state. If he should not recover, indeed whatever turn his complaint takes, I am so emboldened by your encouragement that I am determined to throw myself into that mighty gulph which has swallowed up so many, of talents and attainments infinitely superior to my own. One thing however I can boast, and on that one thing I rely, extreme frugality. This must be my main support, my chief *vectigal*. Pray let me have accurate information from you on the subject of your newspaper connection. What is the nature of the service performed by you, and how much of your time does it engross? &c &c. You say a newspaper would be glad of me; do you think you could ensure me employment in that way on terms similar to your own? I mean also in an opposition paper, for really I cannot in conscience and in principle, abet in the smallest degree the measures pursued by the present ministry. They are already so deeply advanced in iniquity that like Macbeth they cannot retreat. When I express myself in this manner I am far from reprobating those whose sentiments on this point differ from my own. I know that many good men were persuaded of the expediency of the present war, and I know also that many persons may think it their duty to support the acting ministry from an idea of thereby supporting the Government, even when they disapprove of most of the present measures.

You will return my best thanks to Burleigh for his obliging letter, and give him to understand, I regret no less than himself my inability to bring about an interview; and that I look forward with eagerness to the time when I may enjoy the pleasures of his conversation.

You speak both of Jones and Myers. The former I have used ill, and want resolution to make an apology. Myers I hope continues a patriot of unabated energy. You would probably see that my brother¹ has been honoured with two college declamation prizes; the second English, and the sole Latin one given. *Ça va*, I mean towards a fellowship, which I hope he will obtain, and I am sure he will merit. He is a lad of talents, and industrious withal. This same industry is a good old Roman

¹ Christopher, afterwards Master of Trinity, Cambridge.

quality, and nothing is to be done without it. In colleges this truth is not, at least among the younger part, very generally received. I begin to wish much to be in Town. Cataracts and mountains are good occasional society, but they will not do for constant companions; besides I have not even much of their conversation, and still less of that of my books, as I am so much with my sick friend, and he cannot bear the fatigue of being read to. Nothing indeed but a sense of duty could detain me here under the present circumstances. This is a country for poetry it is true; but the muse is not to be won but by the sacrifice of time, and time I have not to spare.

You inquired after the name of one of my poetical bantlings. Children of this species ought to be named after their characters, and here I am at a loss, as my offspring seems to have no character at all. I have however christened it by the appellation of Salisbury Plain;¹ though, A night on Salisbury plain,—were it not so insufferably awkward—would better suit the thing itself. Pray let me hear from you as soon as possible, giving me a just representation of your own employment, not concealing from me any of its disadvantages, and letting me know also what prospect there is of my procuring a similar occupation. I shall wait for your letter in patience.

Believe me, dear Mathews, your very affectionate friend,
W. Wordsworth.

K. 45. *W. W. to William Mathews*

[Penrith, late Dec., 1794.]

Dear Mathews,

It is a fortnight since I received your letter for which, as you are so much engaged, I am not a little indebted to you. I sat down to reply to it ten days ago, and more than half finished my answer when I was called off, and have not till the present found an opportunity of resuming. I am still much engaged with my sick friend, and sorry am I to add that he worsens daily. I have a most melancholy office of it.

¹ The poem named *The Female Vagrant* in the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798); afterwards, *Guilt and Sorrow; or Incidents upon Salisbury Plain*.

But to other topics. I rejoice with you on the acquittal of the prisoners, and on the same grounds. I cannot say however that I entirely approve of the character of Tooke.¹ He seems to me to be a man much swayed by personal considerations, one who has courted persecution, and that rather from a wish to vex powerful individuals, than to be an instrument of public good. Perhaps I am mistaken; if so, I could wish to have my opinion rectified; such he has appeared to me. I must add that I have not taken up this idea from this last event, for in his share of it I see nothing to blame, but from the tenour of his political conduct previous to that period. The late occurrences in every point of view are interesting to humanity. They will abate the insolence and presumption of the aristocracy, by shewing it that neither the violence nor the art of power can crush even an unfriended individual, though engaged in the propagation of doctrines confessedly unpalatable to privilege; and they will force upon the most prejudiced this conclusion that there is some reason in the language of reformers. Furthermore, they will convince bigoted enemies to our present Constitution that it contains parts upon which too high a value cannot be set. To every class of men occupied in the correction of abuses it must be an animating reflection that their exertions, so long as they are temperate, will be countenanced and protected by the good sense of the country.

I will now turn to what more immediately concerns ourselves. I sincerely thank you for the exertions you are ready to make in my behalf. I certainly mean to visit London as soon as the case of my friend is determined; and request you would have the goodness to look out for me some employment in your way. I must promise however that I have neither strength of memory, quickness of penmanship, nor rapidity of composition, to enable me to report any part of the parliamentary debates. I am not conscious of any want of ability for translating from the French or Italian Gazettes; and with two or three weeks reading I think I could engage for the Spanish. You speak of other

¹ John Horne Tooke, author of the *Diversions of Purley*; a political pamphleteer and parliamentarian, in 1794 tried for high treason but acquitted.—K.

departments of the paper; pray how are they in general disposed? I could furnish—in the way of paragraph—remarks upon measures and events as they pass, and now and then an essay upon general Politics. I should prefer, notwithstanding, confining myself to the two former employments; at least till I had a little more experience. But I am ignorant of the arrangements of a newspaper, and therefore have to beg you would favour me with a fuller account the first time you have leisure.

There is still a further circumstance which disqualifies me for the office of parliamentary reporter, viz. my being subject to nervous headaches, which invariably attack me when exposed to a heated atmosphere, or to loud noises; and that with such an excess of pain as to deprive me of all recollection. I was aware of the objection drawn from the company one must partly be forced into; but this, when a man has his bread to earn, may be easily surmounted. I saw that Grey¹ and Perry¹ associated very little with the other persons employed in that way. This post however at all events I must decline from the reasons already stated. I should be happy to hear that you could give me grounds to suppose you could find employment for me in any other part of a newspaper, for which you think me qualified. I cannot be detained long by my present occupation, so that you are not likely to give yourself trouble to no purpose. I have now finished with business. I have no news to communicate; and not liking to send you so much blank paper as is now before me, I have paused for a moment to reflect in what way I must fill it up.

Penrith, Jan. 7th, 1795.²

I was here interrupted; and have most shamefully neglected,

¹ James Perry (1756–1821), journalist and first editor of *The European Magazine* (1781). He was a supporter of Fox and in 1789, with James Gray, bought *The Morning Chronicle*, the leading organ of the Whigs. Perry was tried in December 1793 for publishing a seditious libel, but acquitted. Perry was said to be lively and versatile, whilst Gray was a deeper thinker.

² K. dates the second part of this letter Jan. 27; but as the p.m. is Jan. 10, and as Raisley Calvert was buried at Greystoke on Jan. 12, this is impossible. K. probably meant to print 7th for 27th, and this is borne out by his giving the date Jan. 7 to the extract which he gives in Appendix to vol. iii (p. 355) *To correspondent Unknown*, and which is in fact taken from this letter!

JANUARY 1795

for upwards of a fortnight, a business which was to me an urgent one, viz. the despatching of this letter. I have no apology to make; I have lately undergone much uneasiness of mind; but I have had sufficient *time* on my hands to write a folio volume! I am therefore without excuse. Parliament has now met, and you will have no leisure to attend to me. I am properly punished for my remissness. I am now at Penrith, where I have been some time. My poor friend is barely alive. I shall not stay here any longer than to see him interred; but, as he may linger on for some days, I must request if you can make time to write to me that you would address me at Mrs. Sowerby's, Robin H[ood] Inn, Penrith, Cumberland. Your paper I have heard is out. I have learned nothing further than that it is democratical, and full of advertisements! Perhaps you are allowed a copy of it yourself; if so, you would oblige me highly, very highly, by sending it down to me here, even if it were the day after its publication. I think also I might forward its circulation in this little place. I don't mention this as an inducement for you to comply with my request. I have spoken of it here to an acquaintance, and he says he should like to take it, if it proves a good one. You see things are beginning to turn with respect to the war. Wilberforce and Duncombe are men respected by a very numerous body of people. I have again to request you would excuse my procrastination, and by no means imitate it. Farewell. Believe me, your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

I fear you will be unable to decipher this scrawl. I must learn to write a better hand, before I can earn my bread by my pen.

p.m. Jan. 10, 1795.

MS.

46. *D. W. to R. W.*

Newcastle Jan 16th. [1795]

My dear Richard,

No doubt William has informed you of the death of his poor friend Raisley Calvert, and that he has made an alteration in his will by which he bequeathed to him the sum of nine hundred pounds.

JANUARY 1795

I have been at Newcastle more than a month, and am very happy in the company of our good friends the Miss Griffiths, who are very pleasant chearful companions and excellent women. I hope I shall hear from you ere long. I was much obliged to you for the 5 pounds you sent me.

William will be in London I dare say, in a fortnight or three weeks at furthest. It is very long since I heard from John, pray tell him I have written to him twice since I heard from him: the first time I directed my letter to Staple Inn and the second to Gravesend. I should suppose he will be thinking about going to Fornsett now. You will consult together about the propriety of his taking my 100£ out with him, to which I give my consent in case you approve of it.

There is a young man of the name of Rogerson who is gone to London from Newcastle lately to an attorney who lives at No. 11 Gray's Inn. His friends are very intimate with the Miss Griffiths, and they as well as the Miss G.'s wish him to be acquainted with you. You will oblige them very much by calling upon him, which I have no doubt you will do as soon as you can. He is a very worthy young man, and his friends are very good people and were intimates of our poor Mother.

I hope I shall hear from you soon. Perhaps your next letter may contain better news than your last about our general affairs. Believe me, my dear brother

most truly yours

D. Wordsworth.

Miss Griffiths beg their love.

MS.
K(—)

47. D. W. to Jane Pollard

Sockburn, April [1795]¹

I am sure my dearest Jane that this letter will not be so welcome to you as your friend in person, and that you will be much mortified to hear that you are not to see me till three

¹ In a letter to Samuel Ferguson dated March 11th, 1795, Mrs. Rawson says: 'Dorothy is now at Newcastle, so is also Elizabeth Threlkeld—I expect them in the course of the spring returning together here;'—which dates this letter.

weeks are expired *after you receive this*; three weeks however will soon be over and then I hope we shall have a happy meeting; and spend a happy year together. You must recollect my friends the Hutchinsons, my sole companions at Penrith, who removed the tediousness of many a hour, and whose company in the absence of my brothers was the only *agreeable* variety which Penrith afforded. They are settled at Sockburn—six miles from Darlington—perfectly to their satisfaction, they are quite independent and have not a wish ungratified, very different indeed is their present situation from what it was formerly when we compared grievances and lamented the misfortune of losing our parents at an early age and being thrown upon the mercy of ill-natured and illiberal relations. Their brother has a farm, of about £200 a year, and they keep his house. He is a very amiable young man, uncommonly fond of his sisters, and in short, every thing that they can desire. The house was built by their uncle, who left them the furniture and eighteen hundred pounds which with what they had makes them very comfortable. It is an excellent house, not at all like a farmhouse and they seem to have none of the trouble which I used to think must make farmers always in a bustle, for they have very little corn and only two cows. It is a grazing estate, and most delightfully pleasant, washed nearly round by the Tees (a noble river,) and stocked with sheep and lambs which look very pretty, and to me give it a very interesting appearance. When I came I had no intention of staying longer than till yesterday; but Mary and Peggy were so very desirous that I should remain with them some time longer, that they would insist upon my writing to Elizabeth to propose her contriving if she could, some means of going without me. This I did without the least expectation of success, and much more to please them, than myself, for though I wished exceedingly to stay I saw that Elizabeth would have a thousand difficulties to encounter before she could manage it. Elizabeth was very kind in seeking out for a third in a chaise and succeeded, which I am very glad of as she will go equally as comfortably as if I had been with her. I am very glad that it has been managed so conveniently as perhaps I may never have another opportunity of seeing my old friends. Whenever I

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came to Newcastle, I had promised them if it were possible to stop by the road but I had quite given up the idea till two days before I came off, and they were to have *met me* at Darlington where we were to have stayed all night. You cannot think what pleasure it gives me to see them so happy; situated exactly as our imaginations and wishes used to represent when there was little hope that they would be realized. When shall I have the felicity of welcoming you my earliest friend to such a home? Would not you my dearest Jane be delighted beyond expression to be my guest? but these are airy dreams.

I shall take the coach at Northallerton when I return to Halifax. You know I have no fears and am a tolerable traveller; so, as I shall go cheaper than if I had gone with Elizabeth in a *chaise*, I shall be better satisfied to travel in the *heavy coach*. We spend our time very pleasantly in walking, reading, working and playing at ball in the meadow in which the house stands, which is scattered over with sheep and 'green as an emerald'. I have said nothing of your silence; because I have nothing to say that your own heart will not suggest to you, namely that I have been concerned at it, and that I have wished for a letter from you; you know I could not be angry with you, or reproach you. Pray do write to me here. What a loss I shall find in coming from the mill to Halifax without finding you! how I wish you had still been at Bull Close! Do not however understand from this that I shall think the walk from the mill to Ovenden too long for one day; do not be surprized if I come and breakfast with you some morning. I hope we shall spend many a day together this summer. I feel much interested for poor Mrs. Ralph and her family. They have had a great loss, for I have no doubt Mr. R. was an excellent husband and father; but as a minister and a member of society his usefulness was certainly much diminished within the last ten years. You may recollect how much I was struck with the change in his manner of preaching. I fear that the Chapel will go entirely to decay as there are so few people to support it. It will give you pleasure to hear that I have seen my uncle Crackanthorpe. He expressed so much affection for me and my brothers to the Miss Griffiths that I could not resist, and indeed I am very glad that we had

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a meeting for his behaviour to me was very kind and affectionate. I am convinced that his faults are chiefly owing to his wife, whom I can never think otherwise of than as a proud and selfish woman; he is the creature of impulse and when left entirely to the workings of his own mind I am sure he would always act well, for he has a great deal of sensibility and a benevolent disposition. He gave me ten guineas which you will say was very kind; indeed it was, and the manner of giving it made it doubly so. I never saw a man so agitated in my life as he was at our meeting; I am sure at that time he felt the most affectionate sentiments towards me, and if there were not some exterior influence those sentiments would be likely to be uniform. Do you intend to pay the powder tax?¹ It has been much the subject of conversation in all parties at Newcastle, and no doubt at Halifax and everywhere else. I should at once declare off the payment of any tax to such an amount under *any circumstances* but I really think in the present case there are reasons against it. Would it not be better that every individual however [insig]nificant should avail himself of every fair opportunity of declaring his disapprobation of the present destructive war, or at least that he should not give his approbation of it by supporting it either directly or indirectly; in any case in which he is not obliged to it. We all walk over to Darlington tomorrow morning to meet Elizabeth. She will have told you all the Newcastle adventures before I see you, how impatient you will be to see her! I flatter myself, however, your impatience would be doubled if you were to see me also. She is to be the bearer of this letter. I hope that you will write to me. Direct at Mr. Hutchinson's, Sockburn, near Northallerton.

I am glad you have been so happy at Leeds. I wish it had been in your power to *perform a perfect cure* upon your patient. Pray how is he? I find Ellen is at Manchester—this I heard from Mrs. Rawson, for I have not had a letter from you since I went to Newcastle. Give my love to all your sisters,

¹ An annual tax (imposed by Pitt in 1795) of a guinea on all who wore powder in their hair. It was calculated to produce £210,000, but, partly owing to sentiments here expressed by D. W., powdering the hair went out of fashion and the tax proved unproductive.

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Harriot in particular. Adieu believe me most affectionately
yours.

D. Wordsworth.

Excuse scrawling. I would have written more but I have
yet two letters to write.

Address: Miss Jane Pollard, Halifax.

MS. 48. D. W. to Jane Marshall (*née* Pollard)¹
K(—)

Mill House September 2nd. [1795]

You have now been a week in your own house where I have
no doubt you find all the happiness which even my friendship
can make me wish for you. You now feel yourself at home and
have leisure to enjoy the conversation of your *absent* friends as
well as that of those around you. My dearest Jane believe me,
I congratulate you upon your present felicity and your happy
prospects with the most heartfelt pleasure. I know enough of
Mr. Marshall's character to be persuaded that the hopes you
had formed of happiness would receive daily confirmation but
I was not the less rejoiced to be assured of it by yourself. Long
may you enjoy health and every other comfort of this life! I
am very glad you were so much pleased with your tour, but
I cannot help regretting that the weather was not more uni-
formly fine; one cannot however, have *every thing* that one
wishes for and perhaps upon the whole you were as fortunate as
most people who visit that rainy corner of the island. I thought
a great deal about you, and was often with you in idea. I am
very sorry you did not go to Armathwaite, but your loss was not
so great as I at first thought, as you would not have seen Margaret
Spedding; she is staying at Dr. Baldwin's at present. Do not
flatter yourself however that you have any good idea of Bassen-
thwaite lake from having seen it from the top of the hill. For
the credit of my own taste I am interested in undeceiving you
if you suppose so, as there is nothing uncommonly beautiful
in the view from that point.

I was interrupted yesterday in writing by the arrival of
Mrs. Threlkeld and Elizabeth who were going to call upon Miss

¹ Jane Pollard was married to John Marshall of Leeds on Aug. 5. The
honeymoon was spent in the Lake District.

Stansfield at Field house, whom by the bye I have seen, and with very great pleasure, for she had left Leeds and seen you the day before. We are to dine at Mr. Threlkelds to-morrow and are to meet Mrs. Jones and one or both of your sisters. We drank tea at Martha Ferguson's on friday where we met all your sisters; Harriot and I had a deal of talk, as you may suppose, about all you have seen and done since I shook hands with you at the end of the lane. I had also the pleasure of introducing my brother Kitt to them who has been staying here a week. I parted from him with infinite regret on Saturday morning—we could not prevail upon him to stay another day; the calls of duty were not to be resisted. I wished very much that you had seen him. If you had seen him *sufficiently* you must have liked him. He has a most delightful disposition, and though perhaps not much ease in his manners, yet *I* think they are very pleasing, I am not, however the most impartial of judges. After having said all this to tell you that he is very like me may make you smile, as it is a little like vanity; it is, however, allowed by every one, and I myself think I never saw a stronger likeness. He is not to leave Cambridge again till he takes his degree (in January) and during that time he will be confined to hard study. Mr. Whitaker came in upon us at Miss Ferguson's; he was not with us long enough to develop his agreeable qualities for we only saw him about five minutes. I was very much struck with the formality and apparent coldness of his address, and wished to have been long enough in his company to have seen that wear off. Mr. Rawson left us on Wednesday, he is gone a long journey, to London Bristol Bath etc. etc. and has taken Wm Rawson along with him. I am going now to tell you what is for your own eyes and ears alone. I need say no more than this I am sure, to insure your most careful secrecy. Know then that I am going to live in Dorsetshire. Let me, however, methodically state the whole plan, and then my dearest Jane I doubt not you will rejoice in the prospect which at last opens before me of having, at least for a time a comfortable home, and a house of my own. You know the pleasure which I have always attached to the idea of home, a blessing which I so early lost (though made up to me as well as the most affectionate care

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of relations not positively congenial in pursuits and pleasures could do, and with separate and distinct views). I think I told you that Mr. Montague¹ had a little boy,² who as you will perceive could not be very well taken care of either in his father's chambers or under the uncertain management of various friends of Mr. M., with whom he has frequently stayed. He was lamenting this circumstance, and proposed to William to allow him £50 a year for his board provided I should approve of the plan, at the same time Wm had the offer of a ready furnished house rent free, with a garden, orchard and every other convenience. A natural daughter of Mr. Tom Myers³ (a cousin of mine whom I daresay you have heard me mention) is coming over to England by the first ships which are expected in about a month, to be educated; she is I believe about 3 or 4

¹ Basil Montagu (1770-1850) the natural son of John M., fourth Earl of Sandwich and Martha Ray (who was murdered in 1779). He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge (1786-95), but apparently did not meet Wordsworth in their undergraduate days. In 1791 he married. 'From that moment', he says (autobiog. MS.), 'my father never spoke to me. I lived in lodgings in Cambridge and supported myself by taking pupils, and was helped by my tutor with money to study law. In 1793 my wife died in childbed, two years later I settled in Lincoln's Inn Chambers. My child was with me, entrusted to my protection when I was little able to protect myself. By an accident I became acquainted with Wm Wordsworth. We spent some months together. He saw me, with great industry, perplexed and misled by passions wild and strong. In the wreck of my happiness he saw the probable ruin of my infant. He unremittingly, and to me imperceptibly, endeavoured to eradicate my faults and to encourage my good dispositions. I consider having met Wm W. the most fortunate event of my life. After some time he proposed to take my child from my Chambers in London into Dorsetshire, where he was about to settle with his Sister.' When in London M. joined with Wrangham (*v. Letter 49 note*) in taking pupils, and W. W. lent him a large part of the legacy he had just received from Calvert, on which for some years M. had difficulty in paying the interest. He was called to the Bar in 1798, and after a time rose to eminence in the Chancery and Bankruptcy courts, and gained a great reputation as a writer on legal subjects: he also (assisted by Wrangham) edited Bacon's *Works* (1825-37). As a young man he fully shared W. W.'s revolutionary enthusiasm, but his later association with Mackintosh led to more moderate views. He remained through life a devoted friend and admirer of W., who returned his affection, though suffering more than once from the results of M.'s weakness of character and lack of practical judgement.

² The little boy's name was Basil, not Edward, as stated by the *D.N.B.* (followed by Harper). The *D.N.B.*'s error arises from W. calling him Edward in his *Anecdote for Fathers*. He always signed himself 'Basil C. Montagu'.

³ The son of her father's sister, Anne Myers.

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years old, and T. Myers's Brother who has the charge of her has requested that I will take her under my care. With these two children and the produce of Raisley Calvert's legacy we shall have an income of at least £170 or £180 per annum. Wm finds that he can get 9 per cent. for the money upon the best security. He means to sink half of it upon my life, which will make me always comfortable and independent, without taking into consideration the addition to it which I have every reason to expect from the liberality of Richard. The house belongs to a Mr. Pinney a very rich merchant of Bristol. He had given it up to his son¹ to dispose of it as he pleased ; he has hitherto kept a man and maidservant in it, and has now with his father's approbation² offered it to my brother ; he is to come occasionally for a few weeks to stay with us, paying for his board. It is a very good house, and in a pleasant situation, and there is nothing wanted for us to purchase, except linen of which we are to have the use till we have provided ourselves with it. William is staying at Bristol, at present, with Mr. Pinney and is very much delighted with the whole family, particularly Mr. Pinney the father. You know I had heard much of Mr. Montague's amiable qualities from William, but his judgment might be supposed to be influenced by M.'s particular regard for him. Every thing that I have heard in his praise has however been confirmed to me by Kitt, who speaks in the highest terms of him, he says he is beloved and esteemed by all his acquaintance and that he is sure he may be depended upon as a man of the strictest integrity. This is very satisfactory to me. Kitt has seen the little boy, he says he is a very fine healthy looking child. It will be a very great charge for me I am sensible, but it is of a nature well suited to my inclinations. You know I am active, not averse to household employments, and fond of children. I have laid my plans as distinctly as I can but many things must depend upon unforeseen circumstances, I am, however, determined to adhere with the strictest attention to certain rules. In the first place economy and an attention

¹ John Frederick Pinney and his brother Azariah were pupils of Montagu.

² His father, however, was under the impression that W. was paying rent for Racedown.

to the overlooking every thing will be absolutely necessary for this purpose, not much time is necessary if it is done with regularity. I shall also have a good deal of work, (needle-work) to do—and I am determined to take the whole care of the children such as washing, dressing them, etc., upon myself. I forgot in enumerating the comforts of Racedown (so the place is called) to tell you that we may have land to keep a cow and that there is a cow there of which we may have the use. I think it is probable that there may be a cottager near us to whose charge we may commit it for a share of the milk or some trifling recompense. I mean to keep one maidservant, she must be a strong girl and cook plain victuals tolerably well as we shall occasionally have both Mr. Montague and Mr. Pinney to stay with us. I have now told you all the *certain* income we shall have, added to which Wm has great hopes of having a son of Mr. Pinney for a pupil a boy about thirteen years of age, if he should be entrusted with him, then his income would be large, as he would have a very handsome salary. A friend of William's had the care of one of his brothers in his own house and had two hundred a year with him. I have great satisfaction in thinking that William will have such opportunities of studying as I hope will be not only advantageous to his mind but his purse; living in the unsettled way in which he has hitherto lived in London is altogether unfavorable to mental exertion. By the bye I must not forget to tell you that he has had the offer of ten guineas for a work which has not taken him up much time, and half the profits of a second edition if it should be called for. It is but a little sum but it is one step and promises that something may be done. Kitt is very much pleased with the plan, it will indeed be a great comfort to him and John to have a place to draw to and I hope we shall oftener meet than we have ever hitherto had it in our power. I confess when I think of the importance of my duties I am anxious and sometimes fearful, but resolved as I am to do all that my abilities will permit I hope I shall not fail. My Aunt says she has no doubt of me and Mr. Rawson is of the same opinion. He thinks I am quite equal to the charge. I expect to have some trouble with the children at first, but I am determined to act with resolution and steady-

ness—I hope I shall succeed, Basil Montague is yet by no means a spoiled child notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he has laboured. As for the little girl I shall feel myself quite as a mother to her. I hope she will be healthy, that will be of great importance to my comfort and happiness. I am expecting a letter from my uncle William every day with his opinion of the scheme. I think he cannot disapprove of it, there are so many arguments in its favour. One of the first and greatest is that it may put William into a way of getting a more permanent establishment, and on my account that it will greatly contribute to my happiness and place me in such a situation that I shall be *doing something*, it is a painful idea that one's existence is of very little use which I really have always been obliged to feel; above all it is painful when one is living upon the bounty of one's friends, a resource of which misfortune may deprive one and then how irksome and difficult is it to find out other means of support, the mind is then unfitted, perhaps, for any new exertions, and continues always in a state of dependence, perhaps attended with poverty. I have till now my dearest Jane only spoke[n] of the *pleasant* circumstances attending our plan—I have now to turn to a very painful one, that of leaving my friends at Halifax. I can scarcely bear to think how soon I must bid them farewell. Nothing but absolute necessity could reconcile me to it. But for Montague's sake and in compliance with the request of his father the scheme must be put in execution as soon as possible, and it will be absolutely necessary that I should be present at the first—and then I shall not have the pleasure so much thought of, and so much talked of, of witnessing the happiness of my dearest Jane and her companion. I will not talk of my regret, it will be of no avail, for I can neither diminish yours nor my own by it. I will let you know as soon as everything is fixed and perhaps I may then contrive to spend a day or two with you either on my road, or by coming over to Leeds. I need not caution you again not to speak upon the subject till you hear from me again. I shall not despair of seeing you at Racedown at some time, as though it is 150 miles from London it is very near Devonshire, a country which when you go to London with your husband, I hope our united

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entreaties will persuade him to give you a sight of. It is a tour that is often made and *I think* you would come a little out of your way to see your old friend Dorothy. Oh Jane my dear friend how glad should I be to see you! We will talk of this another time. It shall never be dropped till you come. Mr. Rawson will see William at Bristol. You cannot think how grieved I shall be to leave Mill House. Mr. and Mrs. R. have been *so very*, very kind to me, and my aunt, you know she has been my mother. I shall have to join William at Bristol and proceed thence in a chaise with Basil to Racedown, it is 50 miles. I have received a very polite invitation from the Pinneys to stay at their house on my road. I have told you nothing about our proceedings at Halifax and Mill House. We have had variety of company but for the last week my aunt and I have been very quiet and enjoyed the fine weather highly. We spent a forenoon at Edwards when the Empsons were with us and were highly delighted. Mr. Rawson brought me Mrs. Barbauld's edition of the *Pleasures of Imagination*¹ and the *Pleasures of Memory* both very elegantly bound. I will not apologise for making you pay double postage though I regret that I did not take a large sheet at first. I am afraid you will scarcely be able to read this scrawl—I have really had a wretched pen. My aunt joins with me in every good wish for your happiness and Mr. Marshall's; pray remember me particularly to him, and give my love to Ellen. I had almost forgot to tell you that my aunt Cookson is going to be confined a fifth time at Christmas, and has written to request that I would be at home at that time—thus you see I should at any rate have to go from this part of the world in three months. We expect the Nicholsons to tea this afternoon—they are at White Windows but go to Mr. Threlkelds tomorrow. Adieu dear Jane—again I send you a thousand good wishes.

adieu, ever yours

D. Wordsworth

My love to Ellen.

Address: Mrs. John Marshall, Leeds.

¹ Mrs. Barbauld's edition of Akenside's *Pleasures of Imagination* appeared in this year. The *Pleasures of Memory*, by Samuel Rogers, in 1794. The book is still extant, with the inscription 'The gift of Mr. Wm. Rawson, Aug. 18, 1795'.

NOVEMBER 1795

MS. 49. W. W. to Francis Wrangham¹
K.

Racedown Lodge, near Cruikhern, Somerset,
Nov. 20th, [1795]

My dear Wrangham,

I have had a melancholy proof of my procrastinating spirit in having so longer deferred writing to you. I have to reproach myself the more with this indolence as it has probably prevented our finishing the imitation of Juvenal, so as to have it out this season. I am anxious to know whether it has been advanced by your exertions and to request that, beginning at the verse 'Si² tibi sancta cohors comitum' &c, you would favour me with such ideas as may have suggested themselves to you and parcel out, in such proportions as you approve of, the rest of the poem, to be finished by us separately as we can no longer labour at it jointly.

Soon after I left you I completed something like an imitation, though extremely paraphrastic, from 'Expectata diu tandem provincia' &c. to 'spoliatis arma supersunt' . . .³ I will transcribe for you to correct in some future letter. In the mean time the following verses are at your service to insert them in the poem if you think them worth it. There is not a syllable correspondent to them in Juvenal. They were intended to follow after the lines about titles 'puissant gracious', &c.

Ye Kings, in wisdom, sense and power, supreme,
These freaks are worse than any sick man's dream.
To hated worth no Tyrant ere design'd
Malice so subtle, vengeance so refin'd.

¹ Francis Wrangham (1769–1842), educated at Magdalene and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, where he gained reputation as a fine classical scholar. He was ordained in 1793, but failing to get a fellowship as not 'idoneus moribus et ingenio', and reported to be a friend to the Revolution who exulted in the murder of the French king, he migrated to Trinity. In 1795 he took pupils with Montagu in London and became a prominent member of the revolutionary literary society there. Whether he knew W. at Cambridge or made his acquaintance through Montagu is unknown, but they became lifelong friends. At the close of the year he was made Rector of Hunmanby, Yorkshire, a comfortable living worth £600 a year. He was a prolific author, both of poems, classical translations, pamphlets, and sermons. The translation with W. of Juvenal's democratic eighth satire was evidently begun in London and the first 86 lines written in the summer of this year, 1795. Like W. and M. Wrangham became less revolutionary with advancing years.

² Si: MS. Sit (Juv. viii. 127).

³ ll. 87–124.

Even he who yoked the living to the dead,
 Rivall'd¹ by you, hides the diminish'd head.
 Never did Rome herself so set at naught
 All plain blunt sense, all subtlety of thought.
 Heavens! who sees majesty in George's face?
 Or looks at Norfolk and can dream of grace?
 What has this blessed earth to do with shame?
 If Excellence was ever Eden's² name?
 Must honour still to Lonsdale's³ tail be bound?
 Then execration is an empty sound.
 Is Common-sense asleep? has she no wand
 From this curst Pharaoh-plague⁴ to rid the land?
 Then to our bishops *reverent* let us fall,
Worship Mayors, Tipstaffs, Aldermen and all.
 Let Ignorance o'er the monster swarms⁵ preside
 Till Egypt see her antient fame outvied.
 The thundering Thurlow,⁶ Apis! shall rejoice
 In rites once offered to thy bellowing voice.
 Insatiate Charlotte's tears, and Charlotte's smile
 Shall ape⁷ the scaly regent of the Nile.
 Bishops, of milder Spaniel breed, shall boast
 The reverence by the fierce Anubis lost.
 And tis their due;—devotion has been paid
 These seven long years to Grenville's⁸ onion head.

Five six or seven I do not know how long this luminary has enjoyed the honour of the peerage.

The two best verses of this extract were given me by Southey, a friend of Coleridge: Who sees Majesty, &c. He supplied me

¹ Rivall'd: Outdone (*deleted*).

² Eden, William Eden (1744–1814), created Baron of Auckland 1793, was His Excellency the Ambassador at The Hague during the French Revolution.

³ Lonsdale. Sir James Lowther, Earl of Lonsdale (1726–1802).

⁴ Pharaoh-plague—a reference to the prevalence of gambling at the game of Faro (*v.* Letter 55, note to ll. 30 foll.).

⁵ Swarms: rites (*deleted*).

⁶ Thurlow (1731–1806), Lord Chancellor and a high Tory; in 1792 he intrigued with George, Prince of Wales, against Pitt and was obliged to resign—he was a strenuous defender of the Slave Trade.

⁷ Shall ape, *added in pencil in a hand which may or may not be W.'s.*

⁸ Grenville (1753–1813) became Earl Temple in 1779 and Marquis of Buckingham in 1784.

with another line which I think worth adopting; we mention Lord Courtney. Southey's verse is 'Whence have I fallen alas! what have I done?' A literal translation of the Courtney motto, *Unde lapsus quid feci?* Can you manage to add another line to this, and insert it after 'forfeit loins'. Let me hear from you soon: you will oblige me by transcribing the part of the imitation in your possession, and still more by trans[scribing for] me any additions of your own. I suppose you were too busy to go on with *The Destruction of Babylon*.¹ I don't think you have much occasion to regret your having been otherwise employed. The subject is certainly not a bad one, but I cannot help thinking your talents might be more happily employed.

You flattered me with a hope that, by your assistance, I might be supplied with the *Morning Chronicle*; have you spoken to the editors about it? If it could be managed, I should be much pleased, as we only see here a provincial weekly paper, and I cannot afford to have the *Chronicle* at my own expense. I have said nothing of Racedown; it is an excellent house and the country far from unpleasant but as to society we must manufacture it ourselves. Will you come and help us? We expect Montagu at Christmas and should be very glad if you could make it convenient to come along with him, if not, at all events we shall hope to see you in the course of next summer. Have you any interest with the booksellers. I have a poem which I should wish to dispose of provided I could get any thing for it. I recollect reading the first draught of it to you in London. But since I came to Racedown, I have made alterations and additions so material as that it may be looked on almost as another work. Its object is partly to expose the vices of the penal law and the calamities of war as they affect individuals.² Adieu,

Your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Remember me kindly to [? Bradenburgh]

Address: Revd. Francis Wrangham, Cobham, Surrey.

¹ *The Destruction of Babylon*, a poem sent in by Wrangham for the Seaton Prize at Cambridge. It was rejected, but printed at the request of the judges, and included in *Musae Setonianae*, 1808.

² *Guilt and Sorrow*, an incident on Salisbury Plain (published in part in *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798).

MS.
K(—)

50. D. W. to Jane Marshall

Racedown, November 30th [1795]

My dearest Jane,

If the *intention* of writing may excuse my long silence I am to be excused, for I really never more fully intended anything in my life than to write to you very soon after my arrival at Racedown. I certainly had no right to expect to hear from you till I myself had informed you of my address. Before I begin to tell you anything of my own affairs let me congratulate you upon your happy escape. I cannot conceive anything much more distressing than your situation during the fire, accompanied by the alarm of your mother's indisposition. Perhaps this accident may in fact be a piece of good fortune as it will increase the caution of the people engaged in your *large concern*, and may prevent future and more important mischief. We are now surrounded by winter prospects without doors, and within have only winter occupations, books, solitude and the fire-side, yet I may safely say we are never dull. Basil is a charming boy, he affords us perpetual entertainment. Do not suppose from this that we make him our perpetual play-thing,—far otherwise, I think that is one of the modes of treatment most likely to ruin a child's temper and character. But I do not think there is any pleasure more delightful than that of marking the development of a child's faculties, and observing his little occupations. We found everything at Racedown much more complete with respect to household conveniences than I could have expected. You may judge of this when I tell you we have not had to lay out ten shillings for the use of the house. We were a whole month without servant, but now we have got one of the nicest girls I ever saw; she suits us exactly, and I have all my domestic concerns so arranged that everything goes on with the utmost regularity. We wash once a month. I hire a woman, to whom I give ninepence for one day to wash, on the next we have got the clothes dried and on the third have finished ironing. It is the only time in which I have anything to do in the house, but then I am very active and very busy as you will suppose. I have been making Basil coloured frocks, shirts, slips, etc., and have had

a good deal of employment in repairing his clothes and putting my brother's into order. We walk about two hours every morning—we have many very pleasant walks about us and what is a great advantage, the roads are of a sandy kind and are almost always dry. We can see the sea 150 or 200 yards from the door, and at a little distance have a very extensive view terminated by the sea seen through different openings of the unequal hills. We have not the warmth and luxuriance of Devonshire though there is no want either of wood or cultivation, but the trees appear to suffer from the sea blasts. We have hills which, seen from a distance almost take the character of mountains, some cultivated nearly to their summits, others in their wild state covered with furze and broom. These delight me the most as they remind me of our native wilds. Our common parlour is the prettiest little room that can be; with very neat furniture, a large book[? case] on each side the fire, a marble chimney piece, bath stove, and an oil cloth for the floor. The other parlour is rather larger, has a good carpet, side boards in the recesses on each side the fire, and has upon the whole a smart appearance, but we do not like it half so well as our little breakfast room. I have only had one great disappointment since I came and that was about the little girl. I lament it the more as I am sure if her father knew all the circumstances he would wish her to be placed under our care. Mr. Montague had i[nt]ended being with [us] a month ago but we have not seen him yet; we hope however that he will be with us before Christmas. I have the satisfaction of thinking that he will see great improvements in Basil. Our nearest neighbours have called upon us; I do not think we shall be much benefitted by their society, as they do not seem much inclined either to go out or see their friends; nor indeed if they were would they b[e any] great advantage to us, as though they are very good [kind] people, and seem desirous of doing us any [good turn] in their power, they have not much conversation[. Willi]am has had a letter from France since we came. Annette mentions having despatched half a dozen none of which he has received. My aunt Cookson was brought to bed of a girl nearly three weeks ago. She has now five children. She was doing very well when my uncle wrote to me.

NOVEMBER 1795

The greatest inconvenience we suffer here is in being so far from the post office ; with respect to household conveniences we do very well, as the butcher coming from Crewkerne brings us everything we want. With respect to letters we are however, more independent than most people as William is so good a walker, and *I* too have walked over twice to Crewkerne (the distance in 7 miles) to make purchases, and what is more we turned out of our way three miles, in one of our walks thither to see a house of Lord Powlett's and a very fine view. We were amply repaid for our trouble. If you want to find our situation out, look in your maps for Crewkerne, Chard, Axminster, Bridport and Lime ; we are nearly equi-distant from all those places. A little brook which runs at the distance of one field from us divides us from Devonshire. This country abounds in apples ; in some of our walks we go through orchards without any other enclosure or security than as a common field. When I spoke of the sea I forgot to tell you that my brother saw the West India fleet sailing in all its glory before the storm had made such dreadful ravages. The peasants are miserably poor ; their cottages are shapeless structures (I may almost say) of wood and clay—indeed they are not at all beyond what might be expected in savage life. You must not find fault with this small paper, for I have written so close that my letter contains more than your large sheet, but if I had had any other I should not have made use of this, for I feel as if I had yet a great deal more to say. How does your mother's health continue in general ? When do you expect to see Harriot ? Give my kind love to all at Ovenden. Perhaps you may be there when this letter reaches you. Remember me affectionately to Mrs. Marshall, Mr. M. and Ellen. I of[ten] think of the happy days I spent [with] you and of the hospitality and kind[ness]. Excuse miserable writing. William desires his best compliments to you and Mr. M.—adieu—my dear Jane believe me ever your faithful friend

D. Wordsworth

Address: Mrs. John Marshall, Leeds, Yorkshire.

JANUARY 1796

MS. 51. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*¹

January 7 1796

Dear Sir,

I have not for some time been more flattered than by the highly acceptable present of Southey's Joan of Arc, with which you honoured me by the hands of Mr. Pinney. I should have returned you my acknowledgements immediately, had I not imagined that they would be more acceptable if accompanied with an MSS copy of my Salisbury Plain, which I have been prevented from transmitting you by unforeseen engagements. I am now at leisure and promise myself, in a few days, that pleasure. In the meanwhile I remain your very obliged friend.

W. Wordsworth.

Best compts to Coleridge and say I wish much to hear from him.

Address: Mr. J. Cottle, Bookseller, Bristol.

MS.

52. *D. W. to Jane Marshall*

K(—)

[Racedown, March 7, 1796]

Your letter my dear Jane, brought me the first intelligence of the fire at Mr. Marshall's mill. I sincerely condole with you upon this misfortune; I cannot help lamenting it severely, however it is certainly much more philosophical to consider the matter in the light in which you speak of it, with thankfulness that it did not produce much greater mischief. Your feelings during the fire must have been very dreadful. I am rejoiced to find that you have supported it so well, and that your good mother preserved her fortitude; Mr. Marshall, I know, would bear all with calmness. I am very glad I did not see the newspaper account of your loss. The catastrophe of the 7 poor men was very melancholy. The folly of a mob is inconceivable, what madness could prompt them to fly so in the face of danger without any possible motive?

¹ Endorsed by Cottle, Wm Wordsworth, 1st Letter. Joseph Cottle (1770–1853) made the acquaintance of Coleridge and Southey in 1794, through the medium of Robert Lovel, and became their generous admirer and supporter. W. W. must first have met him in the autumn of 1795.

Their *curiosity* might have been sufficiently gratified at twenty yards distance. Your letter my brother found at Crewkerne on Tuesday. He and the Mr. Pinneys (who have been staying with us a month) went over to dine, at half past eleven o'clock they were not returned, so I had given them up and gone to bed, between twelve and one they arrived. They had been detained by a *fire* in the neighbourhood of Crewkerne. It was singular enough that they should be assisting at a fire and that they should bring me the intelligence of another in which I was so much interested. I could not help observing that though yours made a much greater consumption theirs was a far more serious loss, the poor man is quite ruined.

I am glad to hear that your health is so good. I have not a doubt of your being well taken care of in your present situation. I hope you will continue to go on well, and that an addition to your fireside will bring an addition of happiness. Pray let me hear from you frequently, as I shall be anxious to know that you are well. You do not mention Halifax or our Halifax friends. When do you expect to see Harriot? Did you see much of E. Threlkeld when she was at Leeds? I heard from my Aunt (Mrs. R.) about three weeks ago, I am going to answer her letter to-day, indeed I reproach myself very much for not having done it before; in fact I ought to have written to her, or someone at Halifax before her letter reached me. We have not seen Mr. Montague which has disappointed us a good deal; he was at first prevented by a dangerous illness from coming at the appointed time, and afterwards by business; perhaps we may not see him now before the end of the summer. The Pinneys have been with us 5 weeks, one week at Christmas, and a month since; they left us yesterday.¹ We all enjoyed ourselves very much, I say *we*, for *they* seemed very happy, and to relish the pleasures of our fireside in the evening and the exercises of the morning. They are very amiable young men, particularly the elder. He is two and twenty, has a charming countenance and the sweetest temper I ever observed. He has travelled a good deal, in the way of education, been at one of the great schools, and at Oxford, has had

¹ This statement proves the date of the letter (v. No. 53, W. W. to Wrangham, which is dated).

always plenty of money to spend and every indulgence, all these things instead of having spoiled him or made him conceited have wrought the pleasantest and best effects, he is well-informed, has an uncommonly good heart, and is very agreeable in conversation. His brother is brought up as a merchant (he himself is of no profession) and is a very good young man, and much more pleasing in manners than the generality of young men, but he is not so great a favorite with me as his brother. We seem quite quiet now that we are alone again, and today I am going to employ in writing letters—this is the first of four. We have read a good deal while they were with us (for they are fond of reading) but we have not gone on with our usual regularity. When the weather was fine they were out generally all the morning, walking sometimes; *then* I went with them frequently—riding sometimes, hunting, coursing, cleaving wood: this is a very desirable employment, and what all house-keepers would do well to recommend to the young men of their household in such a coal¹ country as this, for it produces warmth both within and without doors. We have had snow upon the ground this week past. Had we not seen this sight we should have been [al]most unconscious that we had lived one winter [in] the country; we have had the mildest wea[ther] I ever remember; till within the last week we have never wished for a larger fire than prudent people might think themselves authorized to burn in a country where coals are so expensive. You would be surprized to see what a small cart full we get for three or four and twenty shillings; but we have such a habit of attention and frugality with respect to the management of our coals that they last much longer than I could have supposed possible. I have not spoken of Basil yet, he is my perpetual pleasure. He is quite metamorphosed from a shivering half-starved plant, to a lusty, blooming fearless boy. He dreads neither cold nor rain. He has played frequently an hour or two without appearing sensible that the rain was pouring down upon him or the wind blowing about

¹ Cf. *Goody Blake* (1798).

This woman dwelt in Dorsetshire,
 Her hut was on a cold hill-side,
 And in that country coals are dear,
 For they come far by wind and tide.

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him. I have had a melancholy letter from Mary Hutchinson; I fear that Margaret is dead before this time, she was then attending her at Sockburn, without the least hope of her recovery from a confirmed consumption. This account has affected me very much—last year at this time we were all together and little supposed that any one of us was so near death. Our life affords little incident for letters. We had our neighbours (the Pinneys) to dine while our friends were with us, this was what we call a *grand rout* and very dull it was except for the entertainment in talking about it before and after. Wm is going to publish a poem. The Pinney[s] have taken it to the bookseller's. I am studying Italian very hard. I am now reading the *Fool of Quality*¹ which amuses me exceedingly. Within the last month I have read *Tristram Shandy*, Brydone's *Sicily and Malta*, and Moore's *Travels in France*. I have also read lately Madame Roland's *Memoirs*, Louvet and some other French things—very entertaining. Adieu.

William joins me in kind remembrances to Mr. M. My love to your mother and sister. Adieu.

D. W.

You must take a deal of pains to read this scrawl. Adieu.
D. W.

This second fire so shortly after the last is very alarming. I have no doubt you have been sufficiently warned to take care about insurance.

Address: Mrs. John Marshall, Leeds, Yorkshire.

MS. 53. W. W. to Francis Wrangham
K.

Racedown, March 7, [1796]

My dear Wrangham,

Your Letter had long been looked for. The agreeable intelligence it contained respecting your good fortune (I believe among the antients good fortune was reckoned among the first of a

¹ *The Fool of Quality* (1766) by Henry Brooke, a chaotic novel written under the influence of Rousseau. Brydone (1736–1818) was a great traveller and wrote several travel books.

man's merits ; as being a proof, perhaps, of his being under the special care of the gods, and therefore the expression is not to be objected to,) the intelligence then of your good fortune made me quite forget that there was any occasion to apologize for your *inveterate* silence. I sincerely congratulate you on your late induction,¹ as it must set you entirely above the necessity of engaging in any employment unsuited to your taste and pleasures.—I am glad to hear of your projected Volume ; and hope you will not suffer your *promotion* to interfere with the advancement of your Literary reputation, or to rob your friends and the public of the pleasure to be derived from the pieces you are possessed of. I shall be happy to communicate any observations which may suggest themselves to me on perusal of your MSS. I assure you I do not mean to drop the Juvenal scheme ; on the contrary I am determined to bring it to a speedy conclusion. With this view I have this morning sketched out ideas to run parallel with the last forty lines beginning at *Quis Catalina*² *tuis natalibus*, and mean to compose them forthwith. We have had the two Pinneys with us, John for a month : they left us yesterday, and as I now feel a return of literary appetite I mean to take a snack of satire by way of Sandwich. My next letter then will probably contain the passage, for your strictures. If you could find leisure you would oblige me by employing an hour on some part of the work as there is more of it than I wish to execute. I am afraid you have neglected to make application for the newspapers ; they would be a great amusement to us in the depth of our present solitude. I have been engaged an hour and a half this morning in hewing wood and rooting up hedges, and I think it no bad employment to feel 'the penalty of Adam' in this way ; some of our friends have not been so lucky, witness poor Montague. You are now a rich man ; and, of course, like every sensible rich man, will occasionally turn your thoughts towards travel, foreign, or domestic. Devonshire and Cornwall have many attractions ; if they should be powerful enough to lead you this way, you will not pass us by. I have some thoughts of exploring the country westward of us, in the course of next

¹ To the rectory of Hunmanby, Yorkshire.

² Juvenal, Satire viii. 231. *W. should have written* Quid Catilina.

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summer, but in an humble evangelical way; to wit *à pied*. As there are no large cities that road, I shall not have much occasion to shake the dust off my feet, in sign of indignation or abhorrence, on other accounts however it will be necessary to perform that operation.

I mean to publish volume-wise;¹ could you engage to get rid for me of a dozen copies or more among your numerous acquaintance? *The damages*, to use a Lancashire phrase, will be four or five shillings per copy. I do not mean to put forth a formal subscription; but could wish, upon my acquaintances and *their* acquaintances, to quarter so many as would ensure me from positive loss; further, this adventurer wisheth not.² Adieu—your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Basil is quite well, *quant au physique, mais pour le moral il-y-a bien à craindre*. Among other things he lies like a little devil. adieu.

Address: Revd. Francis Wrangham, Basil Montague's, Esq.,
New Square, Lincoln's Inn, London.

K. 54. W. W. to William Mathews

Racedown, near Crewkerne,
March 21st, [1796]

Dear Mathews,

I could wish our correspondence were more frequent. I fully expected to hear from you by Azor Pinney, and was not a little surprized you omitted so good an opportunity of sending me the volume of fugitive poetry. Pray write to me at length, and give me an account of your proceedings in the Society, or any other information likely to interest me. Are your members much increased? and what is of more consequence have you improved I do not ask in the [art] of speaking, but in the more important one of thinking? I believe I put these questions to you once before, but they were never answered.

¹ MS. volumn-wise.

² Cf. dedication of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*: 'wisheth the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth'.

You were right about Southey; he is certainly a coxcomb, and has proved it completely by the preface to his *Joan of Arc*, an epic poem which he has just published.¹ This preface is indeed a very conceited performance, and the poem, though in some passages of first rate excellence, is on the whole of very inferior execution. Our present life is utterly barren of such events as merit even the short-lived chronicle of an accidental letter. We plant cabbages; and if retirement, in its full perfection, be as powerful in working transformations as one of Ovid's gods, you may perhaps suspect that into cabbages we shall be transformed. Indeed I learn that such has been the prophecy of one of our London friends. In spite of all this I was tolerably industrious in reading, if reading can ever deserve the name of industry, till our good friends the Pinneys came amongst us; and I have since returned to my books. As to writing, it is out of the question.

Not however entirely to forget the world, I season my recollection of some of its objects with a little ill-nature, I attempt to write satires; and in all satires, whatever the authors may say, there will be found a spice of malignity. Neither Juvenal nor Horace were without it, and what shall we say of Boileau, and Pope, or the more redoubted Peter?² These are great names, but to myself I shall apply the passage of Horace, changing the bee into a wasp to suit the subject.

Ego apis Matinae
More modoque, &c, &c.³

I hope you have preserved the catalogue of my books left at Montagu's. You would oblige me much by calling there; and desiring James to procure a box sufficient to contain them. See that they are nailed up in it. Gilpin's tour into Scotland, and his northern tour, each 2 vols.,⁴ ought to be amongst the number. Montagu either did lend, or talked of lending, one of these to Miss Roby. Pray request that he would take care to have it

¹ v. Letter 51.

² John Wolcot (Peter Pindar), 1738–1819.

³ Horace, *Carm.* 4. 2. 27.

⁴ 1. *Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1776, in Several Parts of Great Britain, particularly the Highlands of Scotland* (1788, 2 vols.). 2. *Observations relative chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, made in the year 1772, on Several Parts of England, particularly the Mountains and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland* (1787, 2 vols.).

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returned immediately. I am the more solicitous on this account as the books, having been very expensive, are the *less likely* to be returned. Pray give my best compliment to Myers, and say I mean to write to him very soon. How are you now employed? and what do you do for money? If you could muster the cash to come down, we should be glad to see you during the course of this summer. If the outside of a coach should not disagree with you, you might come for a trifle, the fare being only 14 shillings. Pray write soon. Adieu. Your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

My sister would be very glad of your assistance in her Italian studies. She has already gone through half of Davila,¹ and yesterday we began Ariosto. I have received from Montagu, Godwyn's second edition.² I expect to find the work much improved. I cannot say that I have been encouraged in this hope by the perusal of the second preface, which is all I have yet looked into. Such a piece of barbarous writing I have not often seen. It contains scarce one sentence decently written. I am surprized to find such gross faults in a writer, who has had so much practice in composition. Give me some news about the theatre. I have attempted to read Holcroft's *Man of Ten Thousand*,³ but such stuff.

MS. 55. W. W. to Rev. Francis Wrangham⁴ [1796]
K(—)

But whence this gall, this lengthened face of woe?
We were no saints at twenty,—be it so;
Yet happy they who in life's later scene
Need only blush for what they once have been,

¹ Enrico Caterino Davila: *Istoria delle Guerre Civili di Francia* (1559–98), first published at Venice, 1631.

² The second edition of Godwin's *Political Justice* appeared in 1796.

³ Thomas Holcroft (1774–1809), a member of Godwin's circle, writer of many sentimental dramas, of which *The Road to Ruin* (1792) is the most famous, and of propagandist novels. *The Men of Ten Thousand*, a Comedy, was published in 1796. His *Memoirs* were edited by Hazlitt in 1816.

⁴ This letter is dated '1795' by K., who was misled by the fact that a later hand has endorsed it '1795, 2.' (i.e. the second of the Wrangham letters). But it is addressed to Hunmanby; hence it must follow No. 53, in which W.

Who pushed by thoughtless youth to deeds of shame 5
 Mid such bad daring sought a coward's name.
 I grant that not in parents' hearts alone
 A stripling's years may for his faults atone,
 So would I plead for York;—but long disgrace
 And Moore and Partridge stare me in the face. 10
 Alas! twas other cause than lack of years
 That moistened Dunkirk's sands with blood and tears,
 Else had Morality beheld her line
 With Guards and Uhlans run along the Rhine,
 Religion hailed her creeds by war restored, 15
 And Truth had blest the logic of his sword.
 Were such your servant Percy! (be it tried
 Between ourselves! the noble laid aside),
 Now would you be content with bare release
 From such a desperate breaker of the peace? 20
 Your friend the country Justice scarce would fail
 To give a hint of whips and the cart's tail,
 Or should you even stop short of Woolwich docks
 Would less suffice than Bridewell and the stocks?
 But ye who make our manners laws and sence 25
 Self judged can with such discipline dispense,

congratulates Wrangham on his 'late induction'. Moreover, in No. 53 he states that 'I have this morning sketched out ideas to run parallel with the last forty lines beginning at *Quis Catalina tuis natalibus*, and mean to compose them forthwith', and this passage is given here. The date is therefore probably about April–May 1796. K. has also mistaken the order in which the front and back of the letter should be read, with the result that he distorts the Juvenalian sequence of ideas as followed by W., and separates the two halves of the couplet 116, 117.

1–16. Juv. viii. 163 foll.: 'Defensor culpae dicit mihi "*fecimus et nos haec juvenes*"', &c. Frederick Duke of York, second son of George III, was made a general in 1782, and in 1793 was sent out to the Low Countries in supreme command. After a disastrous campaign, in which the English force was defeated at Dunkirk, and expelled from Holland, he returned to England on Feb. 7, 1794. Moore and Partridge, the famous almanac makers and astrologers. Partridge (1644–1715) started his almanac in 1679 and by the end of the century was at the head of his profession. In 1707 Swift began his famous attacks upon him. Moore (1657–1715) started his almanac in 1699 to promote the sale of some pills. For a time he was an assistant to Partridge.

14. Uhlans: MS. Hulens.

17 foll. Juv. 179 foll.

And at your will what in a groom were base
Shall stick new splendour on his gartered grace.

The theme is fruitful; nor can sorrow find
Shame of such dye, but worse remains behind. 30

My Lord can muster (all but honour spent)
From his wife's Faro-bank a decent rent,
The glittering rabble housed to [] and swear
Swindle and rob is no informer there.

Or is the painted staff's avenging host 35

By sixpenny sedition-shops engrossed,
Or rather skulking for the common weal

Round fire-side treason-parties en famille?

How throngs the crowd to yon theatric school

To see an English lord enact a fool 40

What wonder?—on my soul twould split a tub

To see the arch grimace of Marquis Scrub:

Nor safe the petticoats of dames that hear

The box resound on Viscount Buffo's ear.

But here's a thought which well our mirth may cross 45

That Smithfield should sustain so vast a loss,

That spite of the defrauded Kitchen's prayers

Scrub lives a genuine Marquess above stairs,

And they who feed with this Patrician wit

Mirth that to aching ribs will not submit 50

Good honest souls!—if right my judgment lies

Though very happy are not very wise

Unless resolved in Mercy to the law

Their legislative license to withdraw

And on a frugal plan without more words 55

[]

But whence yon swarm that loads the westren bridge,

30 foll. Juv. 184: 'peiora supersint'.

30 foll. The reference is probably to the Duke and Duchess of Buckinghamshire. George Hobart, third Earl of B. (1732–1804), was famous for his interest in dramatic entertainments, and was for a time manager of the opera in London. He and his wife performed in private theatricals at Brandenburgh House in June 1795. They were both notorious gamblers: Lady B., Mrs. Concannon, and Lady Archer were burlesqued by Gilray as 'Faro's daughters'.

39. How throngs &c.: Juv. 188 foll.: 'nec tamen ipsi ignoscas populo', &c.

Crams through the arch, and bellys o'er the ridge?
 His Grace's watermen in open race
 Are called to try their prowess with his Grace.
 Could aught but Envy now his pride rebuke? 60
 The cry is six to one upon the Duke.
 St Stephen's distanced, onward see him strive
 Slap-dash, tail foremost, as his arms shall drive.
 With shouts the *assembled* people rend the skies
 His Grace and his protection win the prize. 65
 Now Norfolk set thy heralds to their tools,
 Marshal forth-with a pair of oars in gules.
 Though yet the star *some hearts* at court may charm
 The nobler badge shall glitter on *his arm*.
 Enough—on these inferiour things 70
 A single word on Kings, and Sons of Kings,
 Were Kings a free born work—a people's choice.
 Would More or Henry boast the general voice?
 What fool, besotted as we are by names,
 Could pause between a Raleigh and a James? 75
 How did Buchanan waste the Sage's lore!
 Not virtuous Seneca on Nero more.
 A leprous stain! ere half his thread was spun
 Ripe for the block that might have spared his son.
 (For never did the uxorious martyr seek 80
 Food for sick passion in a minion's cheek.)
 To patient senates quibble by the hour
 And prove with endless puns a monarch's power,
 Or whet his kingly faculties to chase
 Legions of devils through a key-hole's space. 85
 What arts had better claim with wrath to warm
 A Pym's brave heart, or stir a Ham(p)den's arm?
 But why for [] rake a distant age
 Or spend upon the dead the muse's rage?

72-7. &c. Juv. 211-12:

libera si dentur populo suffragia, quis tam
 perditus ut dubitet Senecam praeferre Neroni.

Buchanan, 1506-82, historian, scholar, and Latin poet, acted as Tutor to James from 1570 to 1578.

The nation's hope shall shew the present time 90
 As rich in folly as the past in crime.
 Do arts like these a royal mind evince?
 Are these the studies that beseem a prince?
 Wedged in with blacklegs at a boxer's show
 To shout with transport o'er a knock-down blow, 95
 Mid knots of grooms the council of his state
 To scheme and counter-scheme for purse and plate.
 Thy ancient honours when shalt thou resume?
 Oh! shame! is this thy service boastful plume?
 Go, modern Prince, at Henry's tomb proclaim 100
 Thy rival triumphs—thy Newmarket fame.
 There hang thy trophies—bid the jockey's vest,
 The whip, the cap, and spurs, thy praise attest;
 And let that heir of Glory's endless day
 Edward, the flower of chivalry, survey 105
 (Fit token of thy reverence and love)
 The boxer's armour, the dishonoured *Glove*.

I have either lost or mislaid my Juvenal, therefore I cannot quote his words, what follows about Cicero¹ might be parallelized by some lines about Andrew Marvel and Arpinas Alius² i.e. another Yorkshireman, by Captain Cooke, but most successfully by Drake. This you will at once perceive. The Decii may perhaps do as follows.

When Calais³ heard (while Famine and Disease
 To stern Plantagenet resigned her keys)
 That victims yet were wanting to assuage 110
 A baffled conqueror's deeply searching rage,
 Six which themselves must single from a train
 All brothers, long endeared by kindred pain,
 Who then through rows of weeping comrades went
 And self-devoted sought the monarch's tent, 115
Six simple burghers—to the rope that tyed
 Your vassal necks how poor the garter's pride!

90. The nation's hope: i.e. the Prince of Wales.

105. Edward, i.e. the Black Prince.

¹ Juv. 235-44. ² Juv. 245-53. ³ W. W. 108-17; Juv. 254-8.

Plebeian¹ hands the [] mace have wrenched
 From sovereigns deep in pedigree intrenched.
 Let grandeur tell thee whither now is flown 120
 The brightest jewel of a George's throne.
 Blush Pride to see a farmer's wife produce
 The first of genuine kings, a king for use,
 Let Bourbon spawn her scoundrels, be my joy²
 The embryo Franklin in the printer's boy 125
 But grant
 The bastard gave some favorite stocks of peers
 Patents of Manhood for eight hundred years.
 Eight hundred years uncalled to other tasks
 Butlers have simply broached their Lordships' casks, 130
 My lady ne'er approached a thing so coarse
 As Tom,—but when he helped her to her horse—
 A Norman Robber then, etc. etc. 133

My dear Wrangham,

Your letter was very acceptable. I have done wrong in not replying to it sooner; if precedents would excuse me I would follow Mr. Pitt's rule and take them from my own conduct; you also might furnish me with some additional store. As to your promoting my interest in the way of pupils, upon a review of my own attainments I think there is so little that I am able to teach that this scheme may be suffered to fly quietly away to the paradise of fools. Your verses are good, but having lost my Juvenal I cannot compare them with the original. There is one weak line 'Urged by avarices,' &c 'murderers shall *die*,' after 'whips racks and torture,' sounds weak.

If your poems³ are published I should have liked to have had a copy. I have been employed lately in writing a tragedy,—the first draught of which is nearly finished. Let me hear from you very soon and I do promise—not a Godwynian, Montaguian,

¹ W. W. 118–33; Juv. 259–75.

² scoundrels *ends line in MS.* Be my joy *next line.* Benjamin Franklin, 1706–90, the famous American writer and statesman, was apprenticed in youth to a printer.

³ *Poems; containing the Restoration of the Jews; a Seaton Prize Poem, with many Translations*, by Francis Wrangham, 1795. The volume contains a translation by W. W. of a French poem by Wrangham.

Lincolntonian promise—that I will become a prompt correspondent. This letter will do as well as a collection of rebuses and enigmas.

As I suppose patience is a topic upon which you occasionally harangue from the pulpit, I recommend it to you to put this letter in your pocket next Sunday, and collecting your parishioners under the reading Desk, or under the old yews in the churchyard if more convenient, and (giving it to them) set your arms akimbo and contemplate its open christian operation upon their tempers. God bless you. Adieu.

W. Wordsworth.

Basil is well.

I was going to conclude, but I have found another piece of blank paper. On the other side you will find or have found, something about a promise to [be] faithful in writing to you. This I repeat in spite of Mr Pitt's additional duty. The copy of the poem you will contrive to frank; else ten to one I shall not be able to release [it] from the post office. I have lately been living upon air and the essence of carrots, cabbages, turnips, and other esculent vegetables, not excluding parsely, the produce of my garden.

The Verses will do. Pray let me hear from you soon, with a fresh supply, and the whole copy. What I have sent you is some of it sad stuff, but there is enough to cut out.

Your poems, What is become of them? It is no disgrace to a man in the moon not to know what is doing here below, and there[fore] do not think the worse of [me] because I have not heard of the[m] for we have neither magazine, review, nor any new publication whatever.

Address: Revd. Francis Wrangham, Hunmanby, near Bridlington, Yorkshire.

ms.

56. *D. W. to R. W.*

[Racedown] Sunday 19th March [1797]

My dear Richard,

I am very sorry that we have not already got some shirts prepared for you as you say you are in great want of them. We

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did not receive the cloth till last week, and till I get a measure of the necks and wrists we shall not be able to do anything. I will thank you to send me upon a sheet of paper the exact length of your necks and wristbands; tell me how long you would choose the *bodies* of the shirts to be, and whether you would choose *two* button holes upon the wrists to be worn with loose buttons; or one button hole and a button fastened to the wrist.

William is gone to Bristol to spend a week or ten days, he left us this morning along with Mr Montague, who came in upon us on Wednesday morning. Mary Hutchinson is still with me; I am very happy in her society. I had a letter from poor John last week; I am sorry that he has not got a berth in Captain Wordsworth's ship. I received the parcel from Miss Threlkeld for which I thank you. I am, my dear Brother,

your very affecte Sister
D Wordsworth.

You shall have some shirts as soon as possible after I get your directions. Do not fail to tell me how long you would have the bodies

Address: Mr. Wordsworth attorney, Staple Inn, London.

MS.
K(—)

57. *D. W. to Jane Marshall*

Racedown, Sunday night
March 19th [1797]

My dearest Jane,

Your letter gave me very sincere pleasure; you will not doubt of this for you must know so much of my heart as to be assured that I rejoice in every additional assurance of your happiness. The dreams of our ardent imaginations have not proved merely shadowy; you seem to be as happy as youthful expectation, and enthusiastic hope ever prompted us to feel that you might be in the society of a man whom you have so long loved. I dare say you have not forgotten our walks in the wood at the side of Mr. Rawson's house, you must remember how happy we were in the *hopes* of those comforts which are now within your reach; and how we looked back with melancholy pleasure upon those

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other enjoyments which can never return, of which the first and chiefest was that of wandering wild together and of shunning [every] other society. I often think of those early days; but I am wandering very far from the interests of today. In the first place let me assure you (but you will perhaps hardly believe me as I have suffered your letter to remain so long unanswered) however it is true, and I must assure you that I had very long intended writing to you before your letter arrived: I had talked of it, and *seriously*, every week, but perhaps the same motives which prevented you from writing might have their effect upon me. Be assured however that your being in my debt had no influence over me, and always rest assured (if ever you should neglect writing to me again for so long a time) that I shall be very far from imputing it to a diminution of your regard for me. We either have or ought to have a peculiar indulgence towards those faults which we ourselves are in the habit of committing; the former is my case; I think I was never in my life *displeased* with anybody for not writing to me punctually however I might *regret* it. Enough of this; let me congratulate you my dear Jane upon the health strength liveliness and activity of your little boy. Your account of him delighted me very much, the more as I find that you do not view him merely with the doating eyes of a mother. You can perceive that he is not handsome: this is a strong presumption that you are not deceived when you please yourself with discovering in him all the more essential qualities to be desired in a child of his age. The first and grand thing is a strong body; this he has and I am sure you will not fail to use all the means in your power to keep it so, or rather to avoid those which may tend to a contrary effect. You ask to be informed of our system respecting Basil; it is a very simple one, so simple that in this age of systems you will hardly be likely to follow it. We teach him nothing at present but what he learns from the evidence of his senses. He has an insatiable curiosity which we are always careful to satisfy to the best of our ability. It is directed to every thing he sees, the sky, the fields, trees, shrubs, corn, the making of tools, carts, etc., etc., etc. He knows his letters, but we have not attempted any further step in the path of *book learning*. Our grand study has been to make him *happy*

in which we have not been altogether disappointed; he is certainly the most contented child I ever saw; the least disposed to be fretful. At first when he came he was extremely petted from indulgence and weak[ne]ss of body; and perpetually disposed to cry. Upon the[se] occasions (perhaps this may be of use to you) w[e] used to tell him that if he chose to cry he must go into a certain room where he cannot be heard, and *stay* till he chose to be quiet, because the noise was unpleasant to us; at first his visits were very long, but he alway[s] came out again perfectly good-humoured. He found that this mode was never departed from, and when he felt the fretful disposition coming on he would say, 'Aunt, I think I am going to cry' and retire till the fit was over. He has now entirely conquered the disposition. I dare say it is three months since we have had occasion to send him into this apartment of tears. We have no punishments except such as appear to be, as far as we can determine, the immediate *consequence* that is to grow out of the offence. He had two mornings last week but one failed to get up when Peggy called him; he came down about an hour after. The second morning Peggy was employed, she could not wash him, we were all engaged and could not fasten his clothes for him, so he was obliged to go to bed again where he lay till 4 o'clock. He has ever since risen at the very first call. His father and William left us this morning. Mr. M. came upon us unexpectedly before we were risen on Wednesday morning. Wm has accompanied him to Bristol where they will spend about a fortnight and then William will return to Racedown. I am excessively pleased with Mr. M. He is one of the pleasantest men I ever saw, and so amiable, and so good that everybody who knows him must love him. You perhaps have heard that my friend Mary Hutchinson is staying with me; she is one of the best girls in the world and we are as happy as human beings can be; that is when William is at home, for you cannot imagine how dull we feel and what a vacuum his loss has occasioned, but this is the first day; to-morrow we shall be better. We feel the change more severely as we have lost both Montague and him at once. M. is so chearful and made us so merry that we hardly know how to bear the change. Indeed William is as chearful as anybody

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can be; perhaps you may not think it but he is the life of the whole house. I have almost filled my paper with such a scrawl as I fear you cannot read. Mary is writing at the same table—we are going to bed. Goodnight; God bless you. Kiss littl[e] William for me. Adieu. Ever yours D. W.

Remember me to Mr M. and your Mother. My love to Harriot.
Address: Mrs. John Marshall, Leeds, Yorkshire.

MS.

58. D. W. to R. W.

[Racedown] May 28th [1797]

My dear Richard,

William has desired me to write to you to beg that you will let us hear from you immediately. We are very anxious to know what you have done respecting Robinson Wordsworth's¹ claims upon us. We are pestered with letters from every quarter upon this subject—Wm had one from Branthwaite the other day. Losh² informed him some time ago that it was universally reported in Cumberland that he had used his Uncle's children very ill. All these things are very unpleasant, besides their claims are so just that it is absolutely necessary that something must be done. W. wishes you would read that part of his letter to Montague which relates to the state of his affairs; he means to request today that Montague would remind you of it.

You never talk of coming to see us. I wish you would contrive to come down this summer. Your business seems to carry you every way but this. I wish we could get a good cause for you at Exeter. The country is now delightful. It has burst into beauty at once after the coldest spring I ever remember. William has nearly finished a tragedy which he has good hopes of getting shewn to Sheridan. Did you see Kitt in the North? Poor John! How glad I should have been to see him here!

Six of your shirts are finished but I think we had better send

¹ W.'s cousin, the son of Richard W. of Whitehaven. The 'claims' must have been for money advanced to W. W. and his brothers by Richard W. in his capacity as joint guardian with Christopher Crackanthorp.

² James Losh of Woodside, near Carlisle, an intimate friend of W.'s.

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them all at once. The rest will be done in six weeks at the furthest. If you wish to have those that *are* done immediately, tell me. Miss Hutchinson is still with us, but I am afraid we shall lose her in the course of the next fortnight. William joins with me in love to you. Believe me dear Richard your affectionate Sister,

D. Wordsworth.

When we last wrote we were all indisposed. We are now quite recovered. Poor Basil was very, very ill. I was afraid we should have lost him. Pray take care of your old cloaths. They will be of great use at Racedown.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS. 59. *W. W. and D. W. to R. W.*

(W. writes)

Racedown Sunday morning June 5th [1797]

Dear Richard,

I am very anxious to hear from you in order that I may give an answer to those letters which I have received from Whitehaven and Harwich. This I promised to do as soon as I should hear from you. I have expected a letter every post. I earnestly beg that you will write immediately, as I have every reason to wish to know what can be done, as well as to give Robinson a conclusive answer. Dorothy says her love.

Your affectionate brother

W. Wordsworth

(D. writes)

We had intended sending this letter by the post but Miss Hutchinson is the bearer of it as contrary to her intention yesterday she goes by London.¹ She will carry you two or three shirts. I wish she could have taken more. I am sorry they are not washed. If you are at home when she calls you will walk out with her and shew her the bridges and anything you may have

¹ This letter, which has come into my hands since writing my *Life of D. W.*, proves conclusively my contention (*Life*, p. 73) that M. H. had left Racedown before Coleridge's visit. It strengthens, therefore, the evidence that Nos. 61 and 63 and other letters 'to unknown correspondent' were addressed to her.

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time for. Perhaps you may be able to go to St Pauls. William of course will hear from you immediately—you will mention how she got forward upon her journey etc. Somerset Terrace or Temple Gardens would be a good place to carry Mary H. to.

Adieu yours affectly
D. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth Staple Inn London.

MS. 60. *W. W. to R. W.*

Racedown Lodge, near Crewkerne Somerset
June 12th [1797]

Dear Richard,

I must write to you again¹—in order that I may know what answer to return to Robinson Wordsworth. What is to be done in this business? I cannot express my anxiety to see it brought to some sort of conclusion. Indeed I think it so proper and just to comply with Robinson's request that I am greatly surprize[d] you have not informed me this is your opinion also. The 200£ would certainly pacify them for a while and give us time to pay the rest in the most convenient manner. I am pledged to write to Robinson again therefore pray let me hear from you immediately and let me know what answer you have returned to him. Miss Hutchinson took up with her 4 shirts for you. I hope you have received them. We are all well

Your affectionate Br
W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

M(—) 61. *D. W. to Mary Hutchinson*²(?)
K(—)

Racedown, [June, 1797.]

. . . You had a great loss in not seeing Coleridge. He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind, and

¹ This letter is the first indication of the exasperating dilatoriness of R. W. who, as eldest of the family, and a lawyer, was entrusted with all their money affairs.

² This letter, written 'to a friend who had left Racedown early in 1797' (M. i. 98), is almost certainly addressed to Mary Hutchinson (v. Letter 59).

spirit. Then he is so benevolent, so good tempered and cheerful, and, like William, interests himself so much about every little trifle. At first I thought him very plain, that is, for about three minutes: he is pale and thin, has a wide mouth, thick lips, and not very good teeth, longish loose-growing half-curling rough black hair. But if you hear him speak for five minutes you think no more of them. His eye is large and full, not dark but grey; such an eye as would receive from a heavy soul the dullest expression; but it speaks every emotion of his animated mind; it has more of the 'poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows, and an overhanging forehead.

The first thing that was read after he came was William's new poem *The Ruined Cottage* with which he was much delighted; and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of his tragedy *Osorio*. The next morning William read his tragedy *The Borderers*. . . .

MS.
K(—)

62. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

Wednesday Morning, [1797]

Dear Cottle,

We received the 10£ note, for which we are very much obliged to you. We *hope* we shall not want any more, but if we do we will apply to you. I write merely to request (which I have very particular reasons for doing) that you would contrive to send me Dr. Darwin's *Zoönomia*¹ *by the first carrier*. If it is not in your power to borrow it I wish you would send to Cote House with my compliments to John Wedgwood, and say that I should be much obliged to him if he would let me have it for ten days, at the end of which time it shall certainly be returned. I am afraid of losing the post.

Yours truly,
W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr. Cottle, Bookseller, Wine Street, Bristol.

¹ MS. *Zoonomia*. *Zoonomia, or the laws of Organic Life*, by Erasmus Darwin, 2 vols., 1794-6.

M(—) 63. *D. W. to Mary Hutchinson* (?)
K(—)

[Nether Stowey, July 4th, 1797.]

. . . There is everything there;¹ sea, woods wild as fancy ever painted, brooks clear and pebbly as in Cumberland, villages so romantic; and William and I, in a wander by ourselves, found out a sequestered waterfall in a dell formed by steep hills covered with full-grown timber trees. The woods are as fine as those at Lowther, and the country more romantic; it has the character of the less grand parts of the neighbourhood of the Lakes. . . .

M(—) 64. *D. W. to Mary Hutchinson* (?)
K(—)

Alfoxden, near Nether-Stowey, Somersetshire,
 August 14, 1797.

Here we are in a large mansion, in a large park, with seventy head of deer around us. But I must begin with the day of leaving Racedown to pay Coleridge a visit. You know how much we were delighted with the neighbourhood of Stowey. . . . The evening that I wrote to you, William and I had rambled as far as this house, and pryed into the recesses of our little brook, but without any more fixed thoughts upon it than some dreams of happiness in a little cottage, and passing wishes that such a place might be found out. We spent a fortnight at Coleridge's; in the course of that time we heard that this house was to let, applied for it, and took it. Our principal inducement was Coleridge's society. It was a month yesterday since we came to Alfoxden.

The house is a large mansion, with furniture enough for a dozen families like ours. There is a very excellent garden, well stocked with vegetables and fruit. The garden is at the end of the house, and our favourite parlour, as at Racedown, looks that way. In front is a little court, with grass plot, gravel walk, and shrubs; the moss roses were in full beauty a month ago. The front of the house is to the south, but it is screened from the sun by a high hill which rises immediately from it. This hill is

¹ i.e. at Alfoxden. W. and D. moved in on July 14.

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beautiful, scattered irregularly and abundantly with trees, and topped with fern, which spreads a considerable way down it. The deer dwell here, and sheep, so that we have a living prospect. From the end of the house we have a view of the sea, over a woody meadow-country; and exactly opposite the window where I now sit is an immense wood, whose round top from this point has exactly the appearance of a mighty dome. In some parts of this wood there is an under grove of hollies which are now very beautiful. In a glen at the bottom of the wood is the waterfall of which I spoke, a quarter of a mile from the house. We are three miles from Stowey, and not two miles from the sea. Wherever we turn we have woods, smooth downs, and valleys with small brooks running down them through green meadows, hardly ever intersected with hedgerows, but scattered over with trees. The hills that cradle these valleys are either covered with fern and bilberries, or oak woods, which are cut for charcoal. . . . Walks extend for miles over the hill-tops; the great beauty of which is their wild simplicity: they are perfectly smooth, without rocks.

The Tor of Glastonbury is before our eyes during more than half of our walk to Stowey; and in the park wherever we go, keeping about fifteen yards above the house, it makes a part of our prospect.

MS.

K(—)

65. W. W. to Joseph Cottle

Allfoxton,¹ Friday, August 16, 1797.

Dear Cottle,

I received the paper enclosing two guineas which were very convenient to me. I am happy to inform you that I had no occasion to avail myself of the draft which you proposed. T. Poole found it in his power to let me have 25£ and on my return to Racedown I found 22£ had been waiting there some time, so that you will perceive I had not the least need of making use of the draft.

¹ The correct spelling is Allfoxton. The W.s generally spell it Allfoxden or Alfoxden.

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I am sorry to hear that your eyes have been so troublesome. We hope that by this time you are perfectly recovered.

We are now settled in this place. I trust I need not repeat how happy we shall be to see you here, and any of your friends whom you may chuse to bring along with you. My sister joins with me in most affectionate respects and believe me, dear Cottle

Your affectionate friend,
W. Wordsworth.

If at any future time I should stand in need of a little temporary accomodation in the pecuniary way, I shall take a pleasure in applying to you. Adieu.

Address: Mr Cottle, Bookseller, High Street, Bristol.

MS.
K.

66. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

13th September, [1797.]

My dear Cottle,

I ought to have answered your last kind Letter immediately. I have nothing that can be urged in my excuse so that I must throw myself entirely upon your friendship. Your offers of pecuniary accomodation were in a very small degree indeed less acceptable than if I had really had occasion to avail myself of them. This is not the case at present—if it should happen to be so, you may be assured I will not fail to betake myself to you. I propose to be in Bristol ere three weeks are past, when I shall have the pleasure of talking to you on books, etc. If you can manage to come over to Allfoxden before, we shall be *very glad* to see you. We hope your health is by this time completely reestablished. My sister joins in affectionate remembrances.

Your sincere friend,
W. Wordsworth.

Coleridge is gone over to Bowles with his tragedy, which he had finished to the middle of the 5th act; he set off a week ago.

Address: Mr Cottle, Bookseller, High Street, Bristol.

NOVEMBER 1797

MS.

67. D. W. to R. W.

Allfoxden November 11th [1797]

My dear Richard,

William has desired me to write to request that you will pay the money for the Insurance on Montagu's life as soon as it is due. Montagu will be in town either in the course of a week or two or if not then certainly in *January*, and will settle the business with you. We have received another letter from my Aunt Wordsworth which Wm has been utterly unable to answer, not knowing at all how those affairs are to be settled. He begs that you will write and let him know what has been done respecting Robinson's demands. We wish very much that you could come down and see us this Christmas. Cannot you manage it? I have never seen you since I was at Windsor, five years ago. It was a great pity that you did not give me an accurate measure of your shirts. Before your letter arrived informing me of the mistake I had made them all but three. I have altered the necks and shall make those which are unfinished wider both in the necks and wrists, but unless you desire it I shall not alter the *wrists* of those which are already done as I think you may be able to get a pair of buttons with a wide link, that is, set at a distance from each other. This will save a great deal of trouble. If this cannot be done let me know and I will alter them. You must write to me immediately if you wish to have the wrists altered as I shall probably have an opportunity of sending the shirts by Montagu. William desires his love. Adieu, my dear Richard, believe me your affect^d Sister D. Wordsworth.

P.S. I received the 5£ which you sent me, I thank you for it. I am in very good health at present.

If you wish to have the wrists of your shirts altered pray let me know as it will be very expensive to you to get it done in London. I abided exactly by the measure which you sent, I was so much astonished at its shortness, that I should certainly have written for a second measurement, if I had not so much confidence in your exactness.

Address: Mr. Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

NOVEMBER 1797

M(—) 68. *D. W. to Mary Hutchinson* (?)
K(—)

Nov. 1797.

[From Porlock] we kept close to the shore about four miles. Our road lay through wood, rising almost perpendicularly from the sea, with views of the opposite mountains of Wales: thence we came by twilight to Lynmouth, in Devonshire. The next morning we were guided to a valley at the top of one of those immense hills which open at each end to the sea, and is from its rocky appearance called the Valley of Stones. We mounted a cliff at the end of the valley, and looked from it immediately on to the sea.

M(—) 69. *D. W. to Mary Hutchinson* (?)
K(—)

Alfoxden. Nov 20 1797

We have been on another tour: we set out last Monday evening at half past four. The evening was dark and cloudy: we went eight miles, William and Coleridge employing themselves in laying the plan of a ballad,¹ to be published with some pieces of William's. . . . William's play is finished, and sent to the managers of the Covent Garden Theatre. We have not the faintest expectation that it will be accepted.

K(—) 70. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

London, Wednesday, December 13 [1797].

Dear Cottle,

I received by the hands of Coleridge sometime since a volume of Icelandic poetry translated by your brother;² I begged Coleridge to return you my best thanks for it. The volume has afforded me considerable pleasure. It is generally executed in spirit, though there are many inaccuracies which ought to have been avoided. I have deferred writing to you till this time,

¹ *The Ancient Mariner*.

² *Icelandic Poetry, or The Edda of Saemund, translated into English verse*, by A. S. Cottle, 1797.

DECEMBER 1797

hoping I might have to communicate some pleasant intelligence ; but I am disappointed. Mr. Harris has pronounced it impossible that my play should succeed in the representation. My sister and I mean to quit London on Friday. We propose to take Bristol on our way. We shall set out from the White-horse, Picadilly, and be in Bristol on Friday night. . . .

Address: Mr J. Cottle, Bookseller, Bristol.

M(—)
K(—)

71. *D. W. to ?*

[Bristol]? Dec. 21 1797

We have been in London: our business was the play: and the play is rejected. It was sent to one of the principal actors at Covent Garden, who expressed great approbation, and advised William strongly to go to London to make certain alterations. . . . Coleridge's play is also rejected.

MS.

72. *D. W. to R. W.*

Allfoxden 6th January [1798]

My dear Richard,

We arrived safely at Allfoxden on Wednesday night, we staid till that time at Bristol. Montagu is now there on his road to London, five of your shirts are sent by him. You had better inquire for them at his chambers. Will you have the goodness to ask the shoemaker if my shoes are sent off and hasten him if they are not? I hope you have despatched the waistcoats along with them, which William left at your chambers, together with a parcel which we entrusted to Mr Knight to be sent to you the day after we left London. I have had a letter from my Uncle William (directed to me in London) in which he requests that you will send him the Evening Mail instead of the General Evening Post. William sends his love

Believe me yours affectionately

D. Wordsworth

Address: Mr. Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MARCH 1798

MS. 73. D. W. to *Mary Hutchinson*

Allfoxden—March 5th [1798]

You desire me, my dear Mary, to send you a copy of the Ruined Cottage. This is impossible for it has grown to the length of 900 lines. I will however send you a copy of that part which is immediately and solely connected with the Cottage. The Pedlar's character now makes a very, certainly the *most*, considerable part of the Poem. You must be contented with a short letter—I am more easy in thinking of any unsatisfactory feelings that you may have in having learnt so little about us when you come to the end of the sheet as I am sure nothing I could say would give you such lasting pleasure as the verses below.

It is decided that we quit Allfoxden—The house is lett. It is most probable that we shall go back again to Racedown, as there is little chance of our getting a place in this neighbourhood. We have no other very strong inducement to stay but Coleridge's society, but that is so important an object that we have it much at heart. We sometimes talk of coming to see you at Sockburn this summer, as if it were not a mere dream, at other times it seems impossible. If the poems bring in anything considerable we know not what we shall do; our wishes will turn to Sockburn, so I think it is very likely you may see us. William was very unwell last week, oppressed with languor and weakness. He is better now. He gets up between seven and eight in the mornings and I dare say will continue it for he is fully convinced of the relaxing tendency of lying in bed so many hours. His faculties seem to expand every day—he composes with much more facility than he did, as to the *mechanism* of poetry, and his ideas flow faster than he can express them.

After having described a hot summer's noon the Poet supposes himself to come in sight of some tall trees upon a flat common

I turned my steps towards a group of trees
Which, midway in that level, stood alone
And, thither come, at length, beneath a shade
29¹ Of clustering elms that sprang from the same root

¹ The figures refer to the lines in the First Book of the Excursion.

MARCH 1798

- I found a ruined cottage, four clay walls
That stared upon each other—
- 31 As I looked around
Beside the door I saw an aged Man
Stretched on a Bench
- 37 An iron-pointed staff lay at his side
Him had I seen the day before—alone,
And on the middle of the public way,
Standing to rest himself. His eyes were turned
- 40 Towards the setting sun, while with that staff
Behind him fixed, he propped a long white pack
Which crossed his shoulders, wares for maids who live
In lonely villages, or straggling huts.
I knew him. He was born of lowly race
On Cumbrian hills, and I have seen the tear
Stand in his luminous eye when he described
The house in which his early youth was passed
And found I was no stranger to the spot.
I loved to hear him talk of former days,
And tell how when a child, ere yet of age
To be a shepherd, he had learned to read
His bible in a school that stood alone,
- 123 Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge
Far from the sight of city spire, or sound
- 125 Of Minster clock—

The poem then goes on describing his character and habits and way of life for above 200 lines—

- Now on the Bench he lay
Stretched at his ease, and with that weary load
Pillowed his head. I guess he had no thought
Of his way-wandering life. His eyes were shut,
- 440 The shadows of the breezy elms above
Dappled his face. With thirsty heart oppressed
- 444 At length I hailed him, glad to see his hat
Bedewed with water-drops as if the brim
Had newly scooped a running stream. He rose,

MARCH 1798

- And pointing to a sun-flower, bade me climb
The wall, where that same gaudy flower
453 Looked out upon the road. It was a plot
Of garden ground, now wild, and in that plot,
Where two tall hedgerows of thick willow boughs
Joined in a damp cold nook, I found a well
461 Half choked etc.—
I slaked my thirst, and to the shady bench
Returned, and while I stood unbonneted
To catch the current of the breezy air
469 The old Man said ‘I see around me
Things which you cannot see—We die, my Friend,
Nor we alone but that which each man loved
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth
Dies with him, or is changed; and very soon
474 Even of the good is no memorial left.
The waters of that spring, if they could feel,
Might mourn. They are not as they were, the bond
487 Of brotherhood is broken; time has been
When every day the touch of human hand
Disturbed their stillness, and they ministered
To human comfort. As I stooped to drink,
Few minutes gone, at that deserted well
What feelings came to me! A spider’s web
Across its mouth hung to the water’s edge,
And on the wet and slimy footstone lay
493 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl.
It moved my very heart. The time has been
When I could never pass this way but She
Who lived within these walls, when I appeared
499 A daughter’s welcome gave me, and I loved her
As my own child. Oh Sir! the good die first,
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
Burn to the socket. Many a passenger
Has blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks
504 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn
From that forsaken well, and no one came
506 But he was welcome, no one went away

MARCH 1798

But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,
The worm is on her cheek, and this poor hut
Stripped of its outward garb of household flowers,
Of rose and woodbine, offers to the wind
A cold bare wall whose earthy top is tricked
With weeds and the rank spear-grass. She is dead
And nettles rot, and adders sun themselves
Where we have sate together, while she nursed
Her infant at her bosom. The wild colt,
The unstalled heifer, and the Potter's ass
Find shelter now within the chimney wall
Where I have seen her evening hearth-stone blaze,
And, through the window, spread upon the road
Its chearful light. You will forgive me, Sir,
I feel I play the truant with my tale.
She had a husband, an industrious man,
Sober and steady, I have heard her say
524 That he was up and busy at his loom
In summer ere the mower's scythe had swept
The dewy grass, and in the early spring
527 Ere the last star had vanished. He who passed
At evening, from behind the garden fence
Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply
530 After his daily work, till the day-light
Was gone, and every leaf, and every flower
Were lost in the dark hedges. So they lived
In peace and comfort, and two pretty babes
534 Were their best hope next to the God in Heaven—
—You may remember, now some ten years gone,
Two blighting seasons when the fields were left
With half a harvest. It pleased heaven to add
539 A worse affliction in the plague of war,
A happy land was stricken to the heart—
It was a sad time of sorrow and distress;
A wanderer among the cottages,
I with my pack of winter raiment saw
The hardships of that season. Many rich
Sunk down, as in a dream, among the poor,

MARCH 1798

And of the poor did many cease to be,
546 And their place knew them not—

It is now to be expressed that a fever seized Margaret's husband—

In disease
553 He lingered long, and when his strength returned
He found the little he had stored to meet
The hour of accident or crippling age
556 Was all consumed. As I have said, 'twas now
A time of trouble. Shoals of artizans
Were from their daily labour turned away
To hang for bread on parish charity,
562 They, and their wives and children, happier far
Could they have lived as do the little birds
That peck along the hedges, or the kite
That makes her dwelling in the mountain rocks—
Ill fared it now with Robert, he who dwelt
In this poor Cottage, at his door he stood
569 And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes
That had no mirth in them, or with his knife
Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks,
Then idly sought about, through every nook
Of house or garden, any casual task
Of use or ornament, and with a strange
575 Amusing but uneasy novelty
He blended, where he might, the various tasks
Of summer, autumn, winter and of spring.
The passenger might see him at the door
With his small hammer, on the threshold-stone
Pointing lame buckle-tongues or rusty nails,
The treasured store of an old household box,
Or braiding cords, or weaving bells and caps
Of rushes, playthings for his babes.
578 But this endured not ; his good humour soon
Became a weight in which no pleasure was,
And poverty brought on a petted mood
And a sore temper,—day by day he drooped,
And he would leave his home and to the town

MARCH 1798

Without an errand would he turn his steps,
584 Or wander here and there among the fields;
One while he would speak lightly of his babes
And with a cruel tongue; at other times
He played with them wild freaks of merriment
And 'twas a piteous thing to see the looks
Of the poor innocent children. 'Every smile'
Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees,
591 'Made my heart bleed'. At this the old man paused
And, looking up to those enormous elms,
He said 'tis now the hour of deepest noon.
At this still season of repose and peace,
This hour when all things which are not at rest
Are chearful, while this multitude of flies
Fills all the air with happy melody,
Why should a tear be in an old man's eye?
Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,
600 And in the weakness of humanity,
From natural wisdom turn our hearts away,
To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears,
And feeding on disquiet thus disturb
604 The tone of nature with our restless thoughts?'

2nd Part

605 He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone etc.,
After about 20 lines descriptive of the Poet's feelings he goes on:
624 I begged of the old man that for my sake
He would resume his story. He replied
'It were a wantonness and would demand
Severe reproof if we were men whose hearts
Could hold vain dalliance with the misery,
Even of the dead, contented thence to draw
630 A momentary pleasure, never marked
By reason, barren of all future good;
But we have known that there is often found
In mournful thoughts, and always *might* be found,
A power to virtue friendly; wer't not so
I am a dreamer among men, indeed

MARCH 1798

An idle dreamer. 'Tis a common tale,
 By moving accidents uncharactered,
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed
 In bodily form, and to the grosser sense
 But ill adapted, scarcely palpable
 To him who does not think. But at your bidding
 640 I will proceed. While thus it fared with them
 To whom this cottage till that hapless year
 642 Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
 To travel in a country far remote ;
 And glad I was when, halting by yon gate,
 Which leads from the green lane, again I saw
 These lofty elm-trees. Long I did not rest,
 With many pleasant thoughts I cheered my way
 O'er the flat common. At the door arrived,
 And when I entered with the hope
 Of usual greeting, Margaret looked at me
 A little while, then turned away
 650 Speechless, and sitting down upon a chair
 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,
 Or how to speak to her. Poor wretch! at last
 She rose from off her seat, and then—Oh Sir!
 I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name,
 With fervent love, and with a face of grief
 Unutterably helpless, and a look
 That seemed to cling upon me, she inquired
 If I had seen her husband. As she spake
 A strange surprize and fear came to my heart
 660 And I could make no answer: then she told
 That he had disappeared, just two months gone
 He left his house, two wretched days had passed
 And on the third, by the first break of light,
 666 Within her casement full in view, she saw
 A purse of gold—'I trembled at the sight'
 Said Margaret 'for I knew it was his hand
 That placed it there, and on that very day
 By one, a stranger from my husband sent
 The tidings came that he had joined a troop

MARCH 1798

- 677 Of soldiers, going to a distant land
He left me thus—Poor Man! he had not heart
To take a farewell of me, and he feared
That I should follow with my babes and sink
Beneath the misery of a soldier's life'—
This tale did Margaret tell with many tears
And when she ended I had little power
684 To give her comfort, and was glad to take
Such words of hope from her own mouth as served
To cheer us both, but long we had not talked
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,
And with a brighter eye she looked around
As if she had been shedding tears of joy—
690 We parted. 'Twas the early spring,
I left her busy with her garden tools,
And well remember o'er that fence she looked
And, while I paced along the footway path,
Called out, and sent a blessing after me
695 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice
696 That seemed the very sound of happy thoughts.
I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale
With this my weary load, in heat and cold,
Through many a wood and many an open ground
700 In sunshine, or in shade, in wet or fair,
Now blithe, now drooping, as it might befall;
My best companions now the driving winds
And now the 'trotting' brooks, and whispering trees,
And now the music of my own sad steps
With many a short-lived thought that past between
And disappeared. I came this way again
Towards the wane of summer, when the wheat
Was yellow, and the soft and bladed grass
Sprung up afresh, and o'er the hay-field spread
710 Its tender green. When I had reached the door
I found that she was absent. In the shade
Where now we sit I waited her return.
Her cottage in its outward look appeared
As cheerful as before, in any shew

MARCH 1798

Of neatness little changed, but that I thought
The honey-suckle crowded round the door,
And from the wall hung down in heavier tufts;
And knots of worthless stone-crop started out
Along the window's edge and grew like weeds
719 Against the lower panes. I turned aside
720 And strolled into her garden. It was changed
The unprofitable bindweed spread his bells
From side to side, and with unwieldy wreaths
Had dragged the rose from its sustaining wall
And bent it down to earth. The border tufts,
Daisy, and thrift, and lowly camomile,
And thyme, had struggled out into the paths
Which they were used to deck. Ere this an hour
731 Was wasted; back I turned my restless steps;
And, as I walked before the door, it chanced
A stranger passed, and guessing whom I sought,
He said that she was used to ramble far.
The sun was sinking in the west, and now
I sate with sad impatience. From within
736 Her solitary infant cried aloud.
740 The spot, though fair, seemed very desolate,
741 The longer I remained, more desolate;
And, looking round, I saw the corner stones,
Till then unmarked, on either side the door,
With dull red stones [? stains] discoloured, and stuck o'er
With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep
That feed upon the commons thither came
746 As to a couching-place, and rubbed their sides
Even at her threshold. The Church clock struck eight,
I turned and saw her, distant a few steps;
751 Her face was pale and thin, her figure too
752 Was changed. As she unlocked the door, she said
'It grieves me you have waited here so long,
But in good truth I've wandered much of late;
And sometimes, to my shame I speak, have need
Of my best prayers to bring me back again.
While on the board she spread our evening meal,

MARCH 1798

- 760 She told me she had lost her elder child ;
 That he for months had been a serving-boy,
 Apprenticed by the parish. 'I am changed,
 And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong,
 And to this helpless infant. I have slept
 770 Weeping, and weeping I have waked, my tears
 Have flowed as if my body were not such
 As others are ; and I could never die.
 But I am now in mind and heart
 More easy, and I hope,' said she, 'that heaven
 Will give me patience to endure the things
 776 Which I behold at home'. It would have grieved
 777 Your very soul to see her, evermore
 792 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes were downward bent,
 And when she at her table gave me food
 She did not look at me, her voice was low,
 Her body was subdued. In every act
 Pertaining to her house affairs appeared
 797 The careless stillness which a thinking soul
 799 Gives to an idle matter. Still she sighed,
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen
 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire
 We sat together, sighs came on my ear
 803 I knew not how, or hardly whence they came.
 809 I took my staff, and when I kissed her babe
 The tears were in her eyes. I left her then
 With the best help and comfort I could give.
 She thanked me for my will, but for my hope
 It seemed she did not thank me.
- I returned
- And took my rounds along this road again
 815 Ere, on its sunny bank, the primrose flower
 Had chronicled the earliest day of spring.
 I found her sad and drooping ; she had learned
 No tidings of her husband. If he lived
 She knew not that he lived ; if he were dead
 820 She knew not he was dead. She seemed not changed
 In person or appearance, but her house

MARCH 1798

822 Bespoke a sleepy hand of negligence ;
The windows they were dim, and her few books,
Which one upon another heretofore
826 Had been piled up against the corner panes
In seemly order, now with straggling leaves
828 Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,
829 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant babe
Had from its mother caught the trick of grief,
And sighed among its playthings: once again
I turned towards the garden gate, and saw
More plainly still that poverty and grief
Were now come nearer to her ; the earth was hard
With weeds defaced, and knots of withered grass ;
836 No ridges there appeared of clear black mould,
No winter greenness ; of her herbs and flowers
It seemed the better part were gnawed away
Or trampled on the earth ; a chain of straw,
840 Which had been twisted round the tender stem
Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root,
The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.
Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,
And seeing that my eye was on the tree,
She said, ' I fear it will be dead and gone
Ere Robert come again '—Towards the house
Together we returned, and she enquired
If I had any hope. But for her Babe
And for her little friendless boy, she said,
850 She had no wish to live, that she must die
Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom
852 Still in its place. His Sunday garments hung
853 Upon the selfsame nail ; his very staff
Stood undisturbed behind the door, and when
I passed this way, beaten by Autumn winds,
856 She told me that her little babe was dead
And she was left alone. That very time,
I yet remember, through the miry lane
She went with me a mile, when the bare trees
Trickled with foggy damps, and in such sort,

MARCH 1798

- 866 That any heart had ached to hear her, begged
That whereso'er I went I still would ask
For him whom she had lost. Five tedious years
873 She lingered in unquiet widowhood, a wife
And widow etc. etc.

You have the rest to the end of Margaret's story. There is much more about the Pedlar. I must now request that you will not let this poem go out of your own hands, even into your brother Jack's.

We hope always to see you with us again. Tom Poole drank tea with us yesterday afternoon; he gives us great hopes that we shall get a very pleasant house a quarter of a mile from this place with furniture etc. We are much obliged to Jack for his wish to send us a ham. If he could consign it to anybody in London who would forward it to us here by the Bridgewater waggon, directed for Mr Thomas Poole, Stowey, near Bridgewater, we should get it. He will calculate whether the carriage will not add too much. If you could send us a Sockburn cheese, we should be very glad, at the same time.

Give my kind love to all.

God bless you, dear Mary—

William's very best love.

[*Unsigned.*]

Address: Miss Hutchinson, Sockburn, near Northallerton, Yorkshire, *redirected* to Stockton.

K. 74. *W. W. to James Tobin*¹

Alfoxden, 6th March, [1798.]

My dear Tobin,

I have long wished to thank you for your letter and Gustavus Vasa. They were both very acceptable to me in this solitude. The tragedy is a strange composition of genius and absurdity; as you have not read it I will take care of it for you. I am perfectly easy about the theatre, if I had no other method of employing myself Mr. Lewis's success would have thrown me

¹ James Tobin, brother of John T., the dramatist, and the 'Dear brother Jem' of the suppressed line in *We are Seven* (v. Fenwick note to that poem).

into despair. The Castle Spectre is a Spectre¹ indeed. Clothed with the flesh and blood of £400 received from the treasury of the theatre it may in the eyes of the author and his friend appear very lovely. There is little need to advise me against publishing; it is a thing which I dread as much as death itself. This may serve as an example of the figure by rhetoricians called hyperbole, but privacy and quiet are my delight. No doubt you have heard of the munificence of the Wedgwoods² towards Coleridge. I hope the fruit will be good as the seed is noble. We leave Alfoxden at Midsummer. The house is let to Crewkshank of Stowey, so our departure is decided. What may be our destination I cannot say. If we can raise the money, we shall make a tour on foot; probably through Wales, and northwards. I am at present utterly unable to say where we shall be. We have no particular reason to be attached to the neighbourhood of Stowey, but the society of Coleridge, and the friendship of Poole. News we have none; our occupations continue the same, only I rise early in the mornings.

I have written 1800 lines of a poem in which I contrive to convey most of the knowledge of which I am possessed.³ My object is to give pictures of Nature, Man, and Society. Indeed I know not any thing which will not come within the scope of my plan. If ever I attempt another drama, it shall be written either purposely for the closet, or purposely for the stage. There is no middle way. But the work of composition is carved out for me, for at least a year and a half to come. The essays of which I have spoken to you must be written with eloquence, or not at all. My eloquence, speaking with modesty, will all be carried off, at least for some time, into my poem. If you could collect for me any books of travels you would render me an essential service, as without much of such reading my present labours cannot be brought to a conclusion. I have not yet seen the life of Mrs. Godwyn.⁴ I wish to see it, though with no tormenting

¹ Matthew Gregory Lewis, 1775–1818, became famous in 1795 by writing *The Monk*, a novel inspired by *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. His play *The Castle Spectre*, written in the same vein, and full of terrors, was produced at Drury Lane in 1798 and ran for sixty nights.

² The Wedgwoods, v. next Letter.

³ The projected *Recluse*.

⁴ *Memoirs of the author of a Vindication of the rights of Woman*, by William Godwin, 1798.

MARCH 1798

curiosity. If you have three pounds, eighteen shillings to spare for a few months I will thank you to call at No. 6 little Ormond street, Queen square, and pay the bill for the newspapers. The bill is either a mistake, or a gross imposition; but there is no remedy. Let me hear from you soon. If you can employ an amanuensis it would be better, as we find it difficult to read your letters.

Basil grows a stout fellow. He has not forgotten you. My sister desires¹ to be kindly remembered to you.

Yours sincerely,
William Wordsworth.

MS.
K.

75. *W. W. to James Losh*

Allfoxden, near Stowey, Bridgewater, Somersetshire,
March 11th, [1798.]

My dear Losh,

I have wished much to hear from you. I suppose that your marriage has not yet taken place or I should certainly have been apprized of it. I have had some fears about your health, but I have constantly banished them as soon as they came into my mind. Perhaps you have heard of the unexampled liberality of the Wedgwoods towards Coleridge; they have settled an annuity of 150£ upon him, for life. We are obliged to quit this place at Midsummer. I have already spoken to you of its enchanting beauty. Do contrive to come and see us before we go away. Coleridge is now writing by me at the same table. I need not say how ardently he joins with me in this wish, and how deeply interested he is in e[very]thing relating to you. We have a delightful scheme in agitation, which is rendered still more delightful by a probability which I cannot exclude from my mind that you may be induced to join in the party. We have come to a resolution, Coleridge, Mrs. Coleridge, my Sister, and myself of going into Germany, where we purpose to pass the two ensuing years in order to acquire the German language, and to furnish ourselves with a tolerable stock of information in natural science. Our plan is to settle, if possible, in a village near a

¹ desires: *K. prints* declared, which is clearly wrong.

University, in a pleasant, and if we can a mountainous, country ; it will be desirable that the place should be as near as may be to Hamburg, on account of the expense of travelling. What do you say to this ? I know that Cecilia Baldwin has great activity and spirit ; may I venture to whisper a wish to her that she would consent to join this little colony ? I have not forgotten your apprehensions from sea-sickness, there may be many other obstacles which I cannot divine. I cannot, however, suppress wishes which I have so ardently felt. Where is Tweddel ?¹ Will you have the goodness to write to him, and to request that he would inform you what places he has seen in Germany, which he thinks eligible residences for persons with such views, either from accidental or permanent advantages, also, if he could give any information respecting the prices of board, lodging, house rent, provisions, etc., upon which we should be justified in proceeding, it would be highly useful.

I have not yet seen any numbers of the *Economist*, though I requested Cottle to transmit them to me. I have been tolerably industrious within the last few weeks. I have written 1300² lines of a poem which I hope to make of considerable utility. Its title will be *The Recluse; or, views of Nature, Man, and Society*. Let me hear from you immediately. My Sister begs her kind remembrances. I am, dear Losh, your affect^d. Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: James Losh, Esqre, Woodside, near Carlisle, Cumberland

Cottle.

76. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

K.

Alfoxden, 12th April, 1798.

My dear Cottle, . . .

. . . You will be pleased to hear that I have gone on very rapidly adding to my stock of poetry. Do come and let me read it to you, under the old trees in the park. We have a little more

¹ John Tweddel (1769-99), author of *Prolusiones Juveniles* (1792), was a brilliant classical scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge, and a great friend of Wrangham. He was at this time on tour in Europe and died at Athens in 1799.

² So MS. (B.M. 18204) ; but K. reads 'seven hundred and six' (in letters). The MS. is torn and badly mended but the figures can only be as in my text.

APRIL 1798

than two months to stay in this place. Within four days the season has advanced with greater rapidity than I ever remember, and the country becomes almost every hour more lovely. God bless you,

Your affectionate friend,
W. Wordsworth.

MS.

77. D. W. to Richard W.

Allfoxden—30th April [1798]

My dear Richard,

I sent your shirts to Bridgwater last Thursday to be forwarded by the waggon. I hope you will receive them safe. I did not know that those which Peggy¹ packed up to be sent by Mr. Montagu were left at Stowey till about a week before your letter arrived, and then I thought it better not to send them till the whole were finished. The parcel contains ten shirts and a parcel for Miss Nicholson, which I will thank you to send to her.

We are to quit Allfoxden at Midsummer—Our present plan is to go into Germany for a couple of years. William thinks it will be a great advantage to him to be acquainted with the German language; besides that translation is the most profitable of all works. He is about to publish some poems. He is to have twenty guineas for one volume, and he expects more than twice as much for another which is nearly ready for publishing.

As we shall most probably go by London we shall see you before we go. Our journey as far as Hamburgh will cost us between twenty and five and twenty guineas; we have reason to think we can live cheaper in Germany than in England. Our design is to board in a family. I was very glad to hear so good an account of poor John. When is he expected home again? I wish we could see you here before we go. You would be delighted with this place. William sends his love to you.

I am dear Richard,
Your affectionate Sister

D. Wordsworth

¹ Peggy Marsh, their faithful servant both at Racedown and Allfoxden. They continued to remit money to her for several years after settling at Grasmere. *v.* Letters 81, 156, &c.

MAY 1798

Cottle.
K.

78. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

Alfoxden, 9th May, 1798.

Dear Cottle,

We look for you with great impatience. We will never forgive you if you do not come. I say nothing of the 'Salisbury Plain' till I see you. I am determined to finish it, and equally so that you shall publish. I have lately been busy about another plan, which I do not wish to mention till I see you: let this be very, very soon, and stay a week if possible;—as much longer as you can. God bless you, dear Cottle,

Yours sincerely,
W. Wordsworth.

MS.

79. *D. W. to Richard W.*

Allfoxden May 31st [1798]

My dear Richard,

As William has not heard from you, and as he finds that Calvert is in Cumberland he concludes that you have received the remainder of the legacy. He requests that you will send him down 30£ of it.—We leave Allfoxden in three weeks; we are going to take lodgings for a short time in the neighbourhood of Bristol. William has now some poems in the Bristol press, and wishes to superintend the printing of them; besides we have some particular friends at, and in the neighbourhood of, that place.

William has sold his poems very advantageously—he is to receive the money when the printing is completed.—I learn from Miss Nicholson that she has received the packet which I sent with the shirts, so I conclude they are safely arrived.

William sends his love, I am, dear Richard, your affectionate
Sister

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Attorney, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

80. *D. W. to Richard W.*

Thursday 13th June [1798]

My dear Richard,

William wrote to you a little while ago to request that you would send him 30£—We have expected daily to hear from you.

JUNE 1798

I am now obliged to write to you again, as we shall leave Allfoxden on Saturday the 23rd of this month. William is already gone to Bristol, and I do not expect him here again. I have the rent to pay, our servant's wages, and several other things before I can quit this place—I therefore beg you will not fail to send the 30£ immediately. We are going into lodgings near Bristol. I write in haste—

Believe me, my dear Richard,
Your affecte Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Attorney, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS.

81. D. W. to Mrs. Rawson

Allfoxden 13th June [— July 3] 1798.

My dear Aunt,

It is useless to tell you what were my resolutions upon the receipt of your last letter—I resolved to answer it immediately but, this resolve slipping from me, I have induced by various circumstances to delay from time to time till 3 months are gone by. Of late I have waited to give you precise information respecting our future destinations. You know that we are obliged to quit Allfoxden at midsummer. It is not, however, on account of the taxes, for we could get rid of them by appealing, but because the house has been taken by another person. At first we regretted this circumstance very much as every thing has contributed to attach us to this place, the society of Coleridge and the friendly attentions of a Mr Poole who is a man of uncommon virtue and good sense, the exceptional beauty of the country, and the excellent opportunities we have of getting books; but as we are now determined upon going into Germany along with Mr and Mrs Coleridge and their family we are glad that we are not shackled with the house.

We have long wished to go into that country for the purpose of learning the language, and for the common advantages to be acquired by seeing different people and different manners. Coleridge has had the same wish; and we have so arranged our plan that I hope we shall sail in two or three months. Our first

intention was to have gone immediately to the neighborhood of one of the Universities ; but as we find that the price of lodgings etc. is much greater in the towns where there are universities we have resolved to go into some small town or village, till we have acquired the language, which we imagine we shall have a good knowledge of in about twelve months, and afterwards, to draw near a university when William and Coleridge will then be better able to profit by the instructions they may have an opportunity of receiving.

We are advised to go into Saxony. Some parts of that country are extremely beautiful and boarding is very cheap. It is our intention (William's and mine) to board in some respectable family for the benefit, or rather the obligation of talking German constantly. The Coleridges, if they can, will take a ready-furnished house as they have two children and must of course keep a servant.

Such are our plans for one year, at least ; what we shall do afterwards it is impossible at present to say. If the state of Europe will permit we shall endeavour to get into Switzerland ; at any rate we shall travel as far as the tether of a scanty income will permit. We hope to make some addition to our resources by translating from the German, the most profitable species of literary labour, and of which I can do almost as much as my Brother.

Poor Basil ! We are obliged to leave him behind as his father, on account of having altered the course of his pursuits in the law, will not be able to pay the additional expenses which we should incur on his account. This, however, might be got over as he has friends who would do it for him, but as the experiment of taking a child of his age into a foreign country is at any rate hazardous, and might be prejudicial if we were not so placed that he might see much of other children, we think upon the whole that it is better that he should not go, taking into calculation the certain expense.

I am convinced it is not good for a child to be educated alone after a certain age. Basil has in some respects, I think, suffered from it, though no doubt in others he has gained ; he has a most excellent temper, is quite free from selfishness, is extremely

active, and never fretful or discontented. Much of his good temper must be owing to our regularity of temper, and the consequent equable treatment which he receives from us. If he had been more with children whose minds were upon *the same level with his own* I think he could scarcely have been without selfishness. As to his activity I believe that the solitude of Racedown tended considerably to increase it. Till a child is four years old he needs no other companions than the flowers, the grass, the cattle, the sheep that scamper away from him when he makes a vain unexpecting chase after them, the pebbles upon the road, etc. etc. After the age of about four years he begins to want some other stimulus than the mere life that is in him ; his efforts would be greater but he must have an object, he would run but he must run *races*, he would climb a wall but he has no motive to do it when he is alone ; he must have some standard by which to compare his powers or he will have no pleasure in exercising them, and he becomes lifeless and inactive.

Basil, as to bodily exertion has had this advantage since we came to Allfoxden: he has played a great deal with a little boy who lives near us. He is a very naughty spoiled child but I think Basil has not suffered so much from him morally, as we expected, and he has certainly gone on improving in physical strength. The situations of the two children at home are so totally different as to prevent all comparison.

The two pages you have just been reading were written about three weeks ago at Allfoxden. We have left that dear and beautiful place and are now at Bristol where we arrived last night, after having spent a week at Mr. Coleridge's after our departure from Allfoxden. We are going into lodgings at Shirehampton, a very beautiful place in this neighbourhood.

I wonder whether we are likely to see Mr. Rawson during our two months residence in this neighbourhood. I fear there is not much chance of it as he generally makes his journey later. I need not say what pleasure it would give me to see him. I wish he had even contrived to visit us at Allfoxden, if he had no other motive than that of seeing an interesting country he would not have been disappointed. I have not often felt more regret than when we quitted Allfoxden ; I should however have felt much

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more if we were not likely in so short a time to have again the pleasure of Coleridge's society, an advantage which I prize the more, the more I know him.

You ask me if I am acquainted with Southey. I know a little of him personally, that is I dined three times at his house when I was in town and called there once or twice; and I know a good deal of his character from our common friends. He is a young man of the most rigidly virtuous habits and is I believe exemplary in the discharge of all domestic duties, but though his talents are certainly very remarkable for his years (as far as I can judge) I think them much inferior to the talents of Coleridge.

I am writing in a front room in one of the most busy streets of Bristol. You can scarcely conceive how the jarring contrast between the sounds which are now forever ringing in my ears and the sweet sounds of Allfoxden, makes me long for the country again. After three years residence in retirement a city in feeling, sound, and prospect is hateful.

We shall certainly not stay at Shirehampton more than three months; we talk of being on board the vessel in two months but I do not think this is very probable as I have no doubt many things will delay the Coleridges which they have no idea of at present.

I think Mr. Rawson has correspondents in Germany; perhaps by these means I should be able to hear from and write to you post free. Otherwise I fear letter-writing will be so expensive that I must very much abridge the quantity of letters which I write. In writing letters in foreign countries the expense is much more than doubled for one is obliged to pay both for the letters sent and received. Perhaps I shall be able to get letters sent by means of the Wedgewoods who are to give us letters of introduction to some Hamburgh merchants. At any rate I must so arrange that when one of my friends hears from me the rest must hear either of or from me.

Give my kind love to Elizabeth Threlkeld. Tell her she shall hear from me very soon. I ought to have written to her some time ago. I can scarcely say why I have neglected it but I will certainly write to her from Shirehampton.

I was very happy to hear of poor Mr. Pollard's release. Will

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his family continue at Ovenden. I have thought that they would perhaps go to Leeds.

When I am just upon the point of concluding my letter I recollect that you may perhaps think that we are going upon an expensive scheme into Germany and that our income will not suffice to maintain us. I must put you to the expense of a double letter to explain this to you. Notwithstanding Mr. Montague, (from having changed the course of his application to the law) has not been able to fulfil his engagement respecting Basil, we have lived upon our income and are not a farthing poorer than when we began house keeping. We can live for less money in Germany than we can in England, so that you see our regular income (independent of what we may gain by translation) will be sufficient to support us when we are there, and we shall receive before our departure much more than sufficient to defray the expenses of our journey from a bookseller to whom William has sold some poems that are now printing, for which he is to have a certain present price and is to be paid afterwards in proportion to their sale. Our expenses last year 23£ for rent, our journey to London, clothes, servant's wages etc. included, only amounted to 110£. We have parted from our servant. Poor girl! it was a hard trial for her. She would have gone to the world's end with us. I believe she was much more attached to us than to any other beings in the world. She was married a year ago and is now with child so she would have left us even if we had been in England.

Remember me very affectionately to the Fergusons. Perhaps we may see Edward. I heard that he was in Bristol last year. Why did he not come to Allfoxden? The distance by the ferry below Bridgewater is only thirty-six miles.

I am very glad to [?hear] that Mr. Griffith [] in his wife and child. Remember me to them when you write.

God bless you my dear aunt, and believe me

Your very affectionate

D. Wordsworth.

Bristol, July the 3rd

Direct to me at Mr. Cottle's, Wine Street, Bristol.

JULY 1798

M.
K.

82. D. W. to ?

July 18, 1798

. . . William's poems are now in the press ; they will be out in six weeks.

83. W. W. to Joseph Cottle¹

MS.

Athenaeum, July 18, 1908.

K(—)

Tuesday [Aug.] 28th [1798]

My dear Cottle,

We arrived safely in town yesterday evening after a very pleasant journey on foot, per waggon, per coach, per postchaise, having expended, each passenger, £1-18-6d, and been admitted to the presence-chamber at Blenheim and seen the University of Oxford.

Our box is not arrived nor any letter from you to apprise us of the manner in which it has been sent off. I forgot to speak to you about the draft for £28 [?] Montagu is not in town, I believe it has not been accepted. I am a stranger to matters of business—What must be done about it? I have two Gilpin's tours,² *into Scotland* one, the *other among the Lakes*. They are expensive books, and I should like to dispose of them. Could you assist me in getting them off my hands? We forgot the letter of introduction to Longman.

I wish you would write to me immediately letting me know about the boxes and by contriving to write to Longman upon the same sheet of paper you may save me the double postage—I will fold up the Letter and carry it to him. God bless you! dear Cottle.

Dorothy begs her best love.

Your sincere friend

W. Wordsworth

Address: Mr Cottle, Bookseller, Wine Street, Bristol.

¹ K., on no evidence, states that this letter was written to *Amos* Cottle.

² v. note to Letter 54.

SEPTEMBER 1798

M.
K.

84. D. W. to ?

Sept. 13, 1798

.. [William's poems] are printed, but not published. [They are] in one small volume, without the name of the author; their title is 'Lyrical Ballads, with other Poems'. Cottle has given thirty guineas for William's share of the volume.

M.

85. D. W. to ?

Hamburgh Sept. 21, 1798

.. On Tuesday morning, Sept. 18, 1798, about two o'clock, we were informed that we were in sight of land, and before ten we were at the mouth of the Elbe. We landed at Hamburgh at four in the afternoon . . .

MS.
K.

86. W. W. to Thomas Poole

Hamburg October 3rd [1798]

My dear Poole,

It was my intention to have written to you from England to bid you farewell. I was prevented by procrastination, and I now take up the pen to assure you that my sister and myself both retain the most lively recollection of the many kindnesses which we have received from you and your family. I believe my letter would be more acceptable to you if, instead of speaking on this subject I should tell you what we have seen during our fortnight's residence at Hamburg.—It is a *sad* place; in this epithet you have the soul and essence of all the information which I have been able to gather. We have however been treated with unbounded kindness by Mr. Klopstock the brother of the poet, and I have no doubt this city contains a world of good and honest people, if one had but the skill to find them. I will relate to you an anecdote. The other day I¹ went into a Baker's shop,

¹ W. has been charged with appropriating to himself an experience of his sister's, as this story of the baker's shop is found in D. W.'s *German Journal*. But a glance at the MS. proves that the handwriting in this passage of the *Journal* is W.'s.

put into his hand two pieces of money, for which I ought to have had five loaves, but I thought the pieces had only been worth two loaves each. I took up four loaves. The baker would not permit this, upon which I took from his hand one of the pieces, and pointed to two loaves, and then, re-offering to him the piece, I took up two others. He dashed the loaves from my hand into the basket in the most brutal manner. I begged him to return the other piece of money, which he refused to do, nor would he let me have any bread into the bargain. So I left the shop empty-handed, and he retained the money. Is there any baker in England who would have done this to a foreigner? I am afraid we must say, yes. Money, money is here the god of universal worship, and rapacity and extortion among the lower classes, and the classes immediately above them; and just sufficiently common to be a matter of glory and exultation.

The situation of the town is, upon the whole, pleasant; the ramparts present many agreeable views of the river and the adjoining country. The banks of the Elbe are thickly sown with houses, built by the merchants for Saturday and Sunday retirement. The English merchants have set the example, the style is in imitation of the English garden, imitated as Della Crusca might imitate Virgil. It is, however, something gained, the dawning of a better day.

We set off this evening by the diligence for Brunswick. We shall be two days and two nights constantly travelling in a vehicle, compared with which Tanlin's long coach is a very chariot of the Gods—Patience patience—We have one comfort travelling in this way, a very great one for poor, viz., that we cannot be cheated. Coleridge has most likely informed you that he and Chester have settled at Ratzeburg. Dorothy and I are going to speculate further up in the country.

I have seen Klopstock, the poet. [There] is nothing remarkable either in his conversation or appearance, except his extreme gaiety, with legs swelled as thick as your thigh. He is in his 74th year. He began his *Messiah* at 17, not the composition, for the plan employed him 8 years.

I sent a copy of my tragedy by Wade. Ward will transcribe it as soon as he can, and you have the goodness to transmit the

OCTOBER 1798

original to Wade. It is in a sad incorrect state. Ward must use his best eyes and his best sagacity in decyphering it.—Pray have the goodness to remove those boxes of ours from that damp room at Mr Coleridge's, and lodge them in some perfectly *dry* place at Stowey. I could wish also that they might be well aired, I mean on the outside, as I am afraid the things may have already sustained some injury. Either let them be put in the sunshine, or before a large fire.

My sister joins me in kindest remembrances to yourself, and your mother, not forgetting Ward. I hope Mrs Coleridge is well, and the children.—Yours most affectionately,

Wm. Wordsworth.

I have one word to say about Allfoxden: pray keep your eye upon it. If any series of accidents should bring it again into the market, we should be glad to have it, if we could manage it

Address: Mr Thomas Poole, Nether Stowey, Bridgewater Somerset, England.

MS.

87. *W. W. to Henry Gardiner*

Hamburg 3rd October 1798

Dear Sir

As you have heard nothing from us you would doubtless conclude that we had given up the idea of visiting Norwich. We arrived at Hamburg a fortnight ago, after a very pleasant voyage, of three days and three nights. We are now on the point of setting off to Brunswick whence we shall proceed into upper Saxony. The place of our destination is yet undetermined, but we intend to fix on some pleasant village or small town. We were very sorry that we did not see you on your return to Bristol. Our going into Wales was quite an unpremeditated scheme. Mr Coleridge proposed it to us one evening and we departed the next morning at six o'clock. We had a very pleasant tour along the banks of the Usk and the Wye, into Brecknockshire. We can scarcely say how we like Germany, Ham-
burgh is, I hope, a miserable specimen of what we are to find.

Every thing is very dear and the inn-keepers, shop-keepers &c,

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are all in league to impose upon strangers. We intend to apply with the utmost assiduity to learning the language when we are settled.

I hope you have arranged the troublesome business in which you were engaged when you left us at Bristol. My sister begs to be kindly remembered to you. I am, dear Sir

Yours sincerely
Wm Wordsworth

I do not yet know what is become of my poems, that is, who is their publisher. It was undecided when I came off, which prevented my sending you a copy, but you will see them advertized and so will learn where you may get them.

Lyrical ballads with a few other poems, is their title

Address: Mr Henry Gardiner, King Street, Norwich, England.

M. K(—) 88. D. W. to Mary Hutchinson¹ (?)

[Goslar October or Nov. 1798]

We quitted Hamburgh on Wednesday evening, at five o'clock, reached Luneburg to breakfast on Thursday, and arrived at Brunswick between three and four on Friday evening . . . There we dined. It is an old, silent, dull-looking place; the duke's palace a large white building, with no elegance in its external appearance. The next morning we set off at eight. You can have no idea of the badness of the roads. The diligence arrived at eight at night at the city of Goslar, on Saturday, Oct 6, the distance being only twenty-five miles.

Coleridge is very happily situated at Ratzeburg for learning the language . . . *We* are not fortunately situated here with

¹ K. prints this letter from M., but divides it into two letters. The first he dates Oct. 3, which is impossible, as in it D. makes the statement that the diligence arrived at Goslar on Oct. 6. He states further that the letter is addressed to Mrs. Marshall. But this is most improbable. M. shows no sign anywhere of having had access to the Pollard-Marshall Letters, and, moreover, this letter is not to be found among them. It is far more likely to have been addressed to Mary Hutchinson, though that is only conjectural.

respect to the attainment of our main object, a knowledge of the language. We have, indeed, gone on improving in that respect, but not so expeditiously as we might have done: for there is no society at Goslar, it is a lifeless town; and it seems that here in Germany a man travelling alone may do very well, but, if his sister or wife goes with him, he must give entertainments. So we content ourselves with talking to the people of the house etc, and reading German. . . . We have plenty of dry walks; but Goslar is very cold in winter. . . . William is very industrious; his mind is always active; indeed, too much so; he overwearies himself, and suffers from pain and weakness in the side.

MS. 89. W. W. and D. W.¹ to S. T. Coleridge

[Goslar Dec. 1798 or Jan. 1799]

Have you been able to get any information concerning the earlier poets of Germany? I find in Monsieur Raimond's translation of Coxe's Travels in Switzerland, that Mr Bodner, a German poet of Zurich, had presented him with a volume of amorous verses of the poets of the thirteenth century. This work is extracted from a manuscript which The king of France entrusted to the city of Zurich in the year 1752. I will transcribe a sentence which follows 'Il m'a encore donné (that is Mr Bodner) le recueil de ses tragedies historiques et politiques, ouvrage aussi savant qu'interessant'. If it had been *son* recueil the meaning of this sentence would have been evident, but the word *savant* seems to imply that it is a collection of which Mr Bodner is only the editor; unless being original tragedies they are accompanied with notes.—As to your hexameters² I need not say how much the sentiment affected me. I have not been sufficiently accustomed to the metre to give any opinion which can be depended upon. One thing strikes me in common with the

¹ Though a joint letter it is all in D.'s hand.

² The hexameters had been sent to W. in a previous letter. Their last two lines run:

William my head and my heart! Dear William and dear Dorothea!
You have all in each other; but I am lonely, and want you.

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German ladies that the two last feet are what principally give the character of Verse to the hexameters—the sum of my feeling is that the two last are more than verse, and all the rest not so much. I mean to say that there should be more of the sensation of metre in the whole of the verse to break the monotony of the two last feet. The lines also are not sufficiently run into each other, but that might be easily remedied. You do not say how you liked the poem of Wieland which you had read. Let me know what you think of Wieland. You make no mention of Klopstock; and what is the merit of Goethe's new poem?

Dorothy has written the other side of this sheet while I have been out—she has transcribed a few descriptions. You will read them at your leisure. She will copy out two or three little Rhyme poems which I hope will amuse you. As I have had no books I have been obliged to write in self-defence—I should have written five times as much as I have done, but that I am prevented by an uneasiness at my stomach and side, with a dull pain about my heart. I have used the word pain, but uneasiness and heat are words which more accurately express my feeling—at all events it renders writing unpleasant. Reading is now become a kind of luxury to me. When I do not read I am absolutely consumed by thinking and feeling and bodily exertions of voice or of limbs, the consequence of those feelings.

In the last stanza of this little poem you will consider the words 'Long time 'as put in merely to fill up the measure but as injurious to the sense—

1

My hope was one, from cities far
Nursed on a lonesome heath:
Her lips were red as roses are,
Her hair a woodbine wreath.

2

She lived among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love;

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3

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky !

4

And she was graceful as the broom
That flowers by Carron's side ;
But slow distemper checked her bloom,
And on the Heath she died.

5

Long time before her head lay low
Dead to the world was she :
But now she's in her grave, and Oh !
The difference to me !

The next poem is a favorite of mine—i.e. of me, Dorothy.

1

Once, when my love was strong and gay,
And like a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath the evening Moon.

2

Upon the moon I fixed my eye
All over the wide lea ;
My horse trudg'd on, and we drew nigh
Those paths so dear [to] me.

3

And now I've reached the orchard-plot,
And as we climbed the hill,
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot
The moon descended still.

4

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind nature's gentlest boon,
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

5

My horse moved on; hoof after hoof
He raised and never stopped,
When down behind the cottage roof
At once the planet dropped.

6

Strange are the fancies that will slide
Into a lover's head,
'O mercy' to myself I cried
'If Lucy should be dead!'

7

I told her this; her laughter light
Is ringing in my ears;
And when I think upon that night
My eyes are dim with tears.

I will now copy those lines which you will find mentioned on the other side of the paper¹—It is the conclusion of a poem of which the beginning is not written.

Among the autumnal woods, a figure quaint,
Equipped with wallet and with crooked stick
They led me, and I followed in their steps,
Tricked out in proud disguise of beggar's weeds
Put on for the occasion, by advice
And exhortation of my frugal dame.
Motley accoutrement! of power to smile

¹ This occurs on the second page of the sheet, of which the third and fourth pages appear to have been filled before the second—to leave room for W.'s letter.

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At thorns, and brakes, and brambles, and in truth
More ragged than need was. They led me far,
Those guardian spirits, into some dear nook
Unvisited, where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation; but the hazels towered
Tall and erect, with milk-white clusters hung,
A virgin scene!—A little while I stood,
Breathing with such suppression of the heart
As joy delights in; and with wise restraint
Voluptuous, fearless of a rival, eyed
The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate
Among the flowers, and with the flowers I played;
A temper known to those who, after long
And fruitless expectation, have been blest
With sudden happiness beyond all hope.
—Perhaps it was a bower beneath whose leaves
The violets of five seasons re-appear
And fade, unseen by any human eye;
Where fairy water-breaks do murmur on
For ever, and I saw the sparkling foam,
And with my cheek upon the mossy stones,
That like a flock of sheep were fleeced with moss,
I heard the murmur and the murmuring sound
In that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay
Tribute to ease; and, of its joy secure,
The heart luxuriates with indifferent things,
Wasting its kindliness on stocks and stones,
And on the vacant air. Then up I rose,
And dragged to earth both branch and bough, with crash
And merciless ravage: and the shady nook
Of hazels, and the green and mossy bower,
Deformed and sullied, patiently gave up
Their quiet spirit: and unless I now
Confound my present being with the past,
Even then, when from the bower I turned away,
Exulting, rich beyond the wealth of kings,
I felt a sense of pain when I beheld

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The silent trees, and the intruding sky.—
Then, dearest Maiden! move along these shades
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand
Touch, for there is a spirit in the woods.

You speak in raptures of the pleasure of skating—it must be a delightful exercise, and in the North of England amongst the mountains whither we wish to decoy you, you might enjoy it with every possible advantage. A race with William upon his native lakes would leave to the heart and the imagination something more dear and valuable than the gay sight of ladies and countesses whirling along the lake of Ratzeburg. I will transcribe some lines which are connected with this subject, and of course will be interesting to you now. It is from a description of William's boyish pleasures.

And in the frosty season, when the sun
Was set, and visible for many a mile
The cottage windows through the twilight blaz'd,
I heeded not the summons: clear and loud
The village clock toll'd six, I wheel'd about,
Proud and exulting like an untired horse,
That cares not for his home. All shod with steel,
We hiss'd along the polish'd ice, in games
Confederate, imitative of the chace
And woodland pleasures, the resounding horn,
The pack loud bellowing, and the hunted hare.
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
And not a voice was idle; with the din
Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud,
The leafless trees, and every icy crag
Tinkled like iron, while far distant hills
Into the tumult sent an alien sound
Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west
The orange sky of evening died away.

Not seldom from the uproar I retired
Into a silent bay, or sportively
Glanced sideways, leaving the tumultuous throng,

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To cut across the shadow of a star
That gleam'd upon the ice: and oftentimes
When we had given our bodies to the winds,
And all the shadowy banks on either side
Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning still
The rapid line of motion, then at once
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,
Stopp'd short; yet still the solitary cliffs
Wheeled by me, even as if the earth had roll'd
With visible motion her diurnal round;
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train
Feebler and feebler, and I stood and watch'd
Till all was tranquil as a summer sea.

I will give you a Lake scene of another kind—I select it from the mass of what William has written because it may be easily detached from the rest, and because you have now a lake daily before your eyes—

One evening

I went alone into a shepherd's boat,
A skiff that to a willow-tree was tied
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.
The moon was up, the lake was shining clear
Among the hoary mountains; from the shore
I push'd, and struck the oars, and struck again
In cadence, and my little boat mov'd on
Just like a man who walks with stately step
Though bent on speed. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure; not without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on,
Leaving behind her still on either side
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. A rocky steep uprose
Above the cavern of the willow tree
And now, as fitted one who proudly row'd
With his best skill, I fix'd a steady view
Upon the top of that same shaggy ridge,

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The bound of the horizon, for behind
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace; twenty times
I dipp'd my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water, like a swan;
When from behind that rocky steep, till then
The bound of the horizon, a huge cliff,
As if with voluntary power instinct,
Uprear'd its head. I struck, and struck again,
And, growing still in stature, the huge cliff
Rose up between me and the stars, and still,
With measur'd motion like a living thing
Strode after me. With trembling hands I turn'd,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the cavern of the willow tree.
There, in her mooring-place, I left my bark,
And through the meadows homeward went with grave
And serious thoughts; and after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Work'd with a dim and undetermin'd sense
Of unknown modes of being; in my thoughts
There was a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion, no familiar shapes
Of hourly objects, images of trees,
Of sea, or sky, no colours of green fields;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, mov'd slowly through my mind
By day, and were the trouble of my dreams.

I will now transcribe a nutting scene¹ (I think I shall not tire you). It is like the rest, laid in the North of England, whither, wherever we finally settle you must come to us at the latter end of next summer, and we will explore together every nook of that romantic country. You might walk through Wales and Yorkshire and join us in the County of Durham, and I would follow at your heels and hear your dear voices again.

¹ v. note, p. 206.

DECEMBER 1798 OR JANUARY 1799

William's foot is on the stairs. He has been walking by moonlight in his fur gown and a black fur cap in which he looks like any grand Signior.

If your eyes are not quite well I am afraid they will suffer from this long ill-written letter, and I begin to be *half* afraid that you will be tired before you get through it . . . but no! you will not.

We intend to lay out a little money on books on our journey. What would you advise us to buy?

It is Friday evening; this letter cannot go till tomorrow. I wonder when it will reach you. One of yours was eleven days upon the road—you will write by the first post.

William says you will preserve any verses which we have sent you, in the fear that in travelling we may lose the copy.

Farewell! God love you! God bless you! dear Coleridge, our very dear friend.

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Herrn Coleridge, Ratzeburg.

MS. 90. D. W. to Christopher W.

Goslar—Feb 3rd 1799—

My dear Brother

As we have prolonged our stay at Goslar so much beyond our expectations, we regret extremely that we limited you to writing within the two months. We wish extremely to hear from you, as we are yet uncertain respecting your Success in the struggle for a fellowship. My Aunt Cookson in a letter which I had from her about two months ago says that you have got two pupils, one the Son of the Bishop of Norwich, but she says not a word about the fellowship. Now we do not know whether to argue from her silence that you have gained or lost the point, as either event would certainly have been worthy of a particular communication.

For more than two months past we have intended quitting Goslar in the course of each week, but we have been so frightened by the cold season, the dreadful roads, and the uncovered carts that we needed no other motives (adding these considerations to

our natural aversion to moving from a place where we live in comfort and quietness) to induce us to linger here. We have had a succession of excessively severe weather, once or twice interrupted with a cold thaw; and the cold of Christmas day has not been equalled even in this climate during the last century. It was so excessive that when we left the room where we sit we were obliged to wrap ourselves up in great coats etc. in order not to suffer much pain from the transition, though we only went into the next room or downstairs for a few minutes. No wonder then that we were afraid of travelling all night in an open cart! I do not believe that we should yet venture to move, if we had not hit upon another plan, namely that of walking the first 30 or 35 miles of our journey, by which means we shall save the distance of 20 miles, a circuit which the diligence makes, and shall also travel through a much pleasanter country.

Nordhausen, a city in Upper Saxony, is the place to which our foot-travels tend. We shall there meet with covered Diligences to all the considerable towns of Saxony. We are not yet exactly decided whither we shall go. We have letters to Weimar, but there are other places which seem to promise equal advantages, and where living is much cheaper as Erfurt, Eisenach etc.—We do not however much expect to find any thing that will induce us to prolong our stay more than a couple of months before we return to Hamburgh; but having advanced so far into the country we are unwilling to remain here without seeing something more.

We have gone on advancing in the language, the main object of our journey, in tolerably regular progress, but if we had had the advantage of good society we should have done much more—this however is a benefit which we have now given up all expectation of attaining, as we find that when a *man and woman* are received into society, they are expected, being considered as a sort of family, to give entertainments in return for what they receive. Now this, in conjunction with the expense of travelling, is absolutely out of our power, though I believe that we could do it, being stationary, for as little expense as we could live for, entirely without company, in England. We have then bounded our desires to seeing a little more of the country, and getting

into a family pretty much resembling this, in which we now are, with whom, as now, we may talk upon common subjects. Perhaps if the weather is fine, and we do not find travelling very expensive, we may not fix more than a fortnight in one place; but make a little circuit from town to town. At present however the weather is not very favourable for such a plan, as though it is very good for walking the set distance which we have to go, yet it is not sufficiently inviting to induce us to ramble much about. It is hard frost, and the snow is still lying upon the ground—We have sent off our luggage and shall take a guide with us—we shall set off on Saturday morning.¹

The climate of this part of Germany appears to me to be much colder than that of England, but I dare say the difference *seems* to be greater than it is on account of the stoved rooms, whose summer warmth makes a contrast with the external air that sets the flesh a creeping, even when you go through the passages and staircases. Our room has never been heated so much by many degrees as the rooms of Goslar in general are, but I got a severe cough in the Seasoning. I am now however quite well, and can bear any transitions. We walk at least an hour every day, often much more. William has a green gown, lined throughout with Fox's skin, and I wrap myself up in furs that defy the cold.

Goslar is not a place where it is possible to see anything of the manners of the more cultivated Germans, or of the higher classes. Its inhabitants are all petty tradespeople, in general a low and selfish race; intent upon gain, and perpetually of course disappointed. They cannot find in their hearts to ask of a stranger a fair price for their goods. The woman of this house who is a civil and good kind of a respectable woman *in her way* could not refrain from cheating us of halfpence and farthings when we first came. She is a widow with 5 children, and keeps a linen drapers shop, which I dare say barely serves to support them decently. Yet she dresses herself out very fine in artificial flowers on a Sunday, and spent half a Louis on a jaunt in a *traineau*,² a luxury which I suppose it would be almost a disgrace not to enjoy once in a winter. When the snow first fell the whole

¹ They started eventually on Saturday the 23rd.

² *traineau*: a sledge.

town was in commotion, traineaux everywhere! but the people are not rich enough to keep to it long—all is now quiet.

Coleridge is in a very different world from what we stir in; he is all in high life, among barons, counts and countesses. He could not be better placed than he is at Ratzeberg for attaining the object of his journey; but his expenses are much more than ours conjointly. I think however he has done perfectly right in consenting to pay so much, as he will not stay longer in Germany than till March or April. It would have been impossible for us to have lived as he does; we should have been ruined. *We* shall certainly return to England before the end of summer, but very probably in the spring. As soon as we are perfectly satisfied with our knowledge of the language we shall think about returning, unless we should meet with so pleasant a residence in Saxony as should induce us to stay there longer than seems at present likely. If we do not, we shall go to Hamburgh at the end of two months, and take lodgings somewhere in that neighbourhood till we can sail for England, which will probably be immediately if we improve sufficiently in the language; if not, as soon as we have attained that end.

William is very desirous to know that his tragedy is safe in your hands. It was entrusted to Richard when we left London to be sent to Mr Josiah Wedgwood at Stoke near Cobham, and Mr W. was requested to forward it to you by the coach. If by any unfortunate accident you should not have received it, Wm desires you will make use of every possible exertion to get it. Write to Richard immediately to know what he has done with it; and if he has forwarded it to Mr Wedgwood, write to Mr W.—in short neglect no step to procure it. You know that Wm has no copy with him, and if it were lost, the work would be irrecoverably gone. Pray write to us immediately—You had best address to us at Hamburgh, as if we should prolong our stay in Saxony your letter can be forwarded to us; if not, we shall find it there when we go. Direct to me to the care of Mr Remnant at the English library in Hamburgh.

Have you heard anything of Peggy our Servant? Be very particular in your accounts of what you are, and have been, doing—Everything is interesting at this distance. William has

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been mixing with his German employments a good deal of English poetical composition. We have lived very happily and comfortably, but not sufficiently differently from our English way of life. A young man, an apprentice in the house, comes up to sit with us every evening; but we have no other society except that of a French Emigrant Priest, and what we find in our daily intercourse with this family. Do not fail to tell us whether the tragedy is safe—and write immediately for even if we do not stay longer than two months in Saxony, we may receive your letter before our departure thence,

William begs his best love. God bless you, my dear Brother—
Believe me

most affectionately yours

D. Wordsworth—

Be so good as to forward this letter to Richard—I write to my Aunt Cookson by the same post so it is unnecessary that you should trouble yourself to inform her of your having heard from me—

Address: Mr Christ. Wordsworth, Trinity College, Cambridge, England (re-addressed by him to Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London).

MS. 91. W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.

Goslar 6th February 1799

My dear Brother,

I write to request that you will pay into Mr Wedgwood's hands the interest of money that you have received on my account. I suppose you have got the interest from Douglass which became due on the 1st of January. He also promised to pay the principal which if he has done you may lay out in the stocks, reserving enough to pay my debts to Mr Wedgwood. I have drawn upon Mr W. for 40£ which, added to what I received at Hamburgh, amounts to 72£ some odd shillings. This is all the money I shall want during our stay in Germany, nor should I have drawn for so much at once, but as we are going into Saxony, where I could not be supplied without great expense and inconvenience, if we should prolong our stay beyond our

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expectations, I have taken up the whole sum I have allotted for the year's expenses.—You will be so good as to pay to Mr W. as nearly to the full amount as you can, but if you should fall 15£, or not more than 20£ short, you need not be uneasy about it.—We have written seven very long letters within these three days so you will excuse my entering into particulars, as D. has desired Kitt to forward a letter to you which will tell you where we are, what we are doing etc. I hope that you took particular care to forward the manuscripts to Miss Nicholson and Mr Wedgwood ; it is of the greatest consequence that they should be safe as I have no other copies of them.

Pray write to us—you may direct to me to the care of Mr Remnant at the English Library in Hamburgh. We shall most likely be at Hamburgh in two months ; if not our letters will be forwarded to us. Dorothy begs her kind love. We have been very comfortable and have had good health since we came into Germany. God bless you.

For W. Wordsworth

Yours very affectely

D. W.

MS. 92. D. W. and W. W. to S. T. Coleridge

Nordhausen Wednesday evening

27th February (1799)

My dear Coleridge,

We have at last received your long desired letters. Our patience was rewarded, or our cowardice flattered, by a most delightful morning which made its appearance last Saturday. Our baggage had been long ready, packed and repacked. We had gone to bed, the friday night being very stormy, without any hope—I called William in the morning ; he saw the sun shining upon the garden, up he got, we put together our last parcel, conveyed it to the post-house, and set off on foot in the afternoon at one o'clock. Goslar lies on the edge of some high hills ; mountains they cannot be called, at the skirts of the Hartz Forest. After walking about a mile we began to ascend through a pine forest which with the accompaniments of tiny waterfalls alias 'Mittenrachs' might, as Wm says, remind a traveller of the

Alps in the same way as a little kitten may suggest recollections of a full-grown tiger. Some of the pine-trees are extremely beautiful. We observed that when they seemed to be past maturity, and perhaps sooner in a close situation, their boughs which had before ascended, making an acute angle with the trunk, descend till they shoot out horizontally or make an obtuse angle with the upper part of the tree. This is effected by the twigs, which from the weight of their foliage drag down the boughs and hang like long threads of ivy in festoons of different lengths, the upper part of the branch being always bare. Some of these threads appear to be two or three yards long. In the very old trees the festoons are interwoven with grey or green moss, giving to the whole tree a very venerable and impressive appearance. We observed that the brilliant green of the earth-moss under the trees made our eyes ache after being so long accustomed to the snow. The peasants in the *plains* adjoining to Goslar are extremely well clothed and decent in their appearance. We had often seen in Goslar women inhabitants of the hills, but we did not imagine them to be so rude and barbarous a race as we found them. They carry enormous burthens in square baskets hung over their shoulders, their petticoats reach very little below their knees, and their stockings are dangling about their ankles without garters. Swellings in the throat are very common amongst them which may perhaps be attributed to the straining of the neck in dragging those monstrous loads. They rarely travel without a bottle of German brandy, Schnapps as they call it. Many of them go weekly from Clousthal to Brunswick, they perform this journey, a distance of thirty five miles in two days, carrying ass-loads, parcels, etc., and letters clandestinely. These people are chiefly inhabitants of Clousthal, a large Hanoverian town cursed with the plague of a vicious population. We arrived there in the dusk of the evening, found an excellent inn, with beautiful bed-linen, good coffee, and a decent supper. The charge was about the same rate as in England; perhaps a little cheaper. This town lies in the centre of the Hartz Forest. We left it on sunday, a mild morning, saw little that was remarkable till we came to the decaying posts of an old gibbet—We had scarcely passed it when we were saluted with

the song of the lark, a pair of larks a sweet, liquid and heavenly melody heard for the first time, after so long and severe a winter. I ought to have said that before this we had a view of the Brocken, the Mont Blanc of the Hartz Forest, and the glory of all this part of Germany. I cannot speak of its height as compared with any of our British mountains, but from the point from which we saw it, it had nothing impressive in its appearance. The day continued chearing and delightful, and we walked through a country presenting forest views of hill and valley, one of which a deep valley with a village built of wood scattered in the bottom was very interesting. We lingered under the shades of the trees and did not arrive at Osterode till four o'clock in the afternoon. It is also a Hanoverian possession, a small *city* lying at the edge of the Hartz forest, in a kind of low wide valley. The appearance of the people as we passed through the streets was very little favorable—they looked dirty impudent and vulgar, and absolutely the whole town being at the windows or in the streets as we unluckily met them coming from church, we were stared completely out of countenance, at least I was ; William stoutly denies that he was at all uncomfortable ; however this was we had not courage to stop at an inn till we had walked through the whole town, and just on the other side of the city gates, we called at one where they told us they could give us nothing to eat. While we stood pondering what we should do, inquiring for another Wirts-haus, and half resolved to go a league further where we were told we could be accommodated, one of the Under-officers of the town, who was drinking with a sort of rabble, in the Wirts-haus where we had been refused admittance, accosted us, and civilly assured us that we should be admitted into the house, but he brought out one of his comrades a little step above him in place and about equal in self-importance and insolence, who questioned us respecting our business etc etc and would not let us pass without a passport. He conducted William to the Burgomaster who promised to grant him the said passport in the morning after he had seen our letters which were to come by the post-waggon, with our trunk in the evening. In the meantime I was left in one of those towers which you always see at the entrance of cities ; amongst a set of soldiers who were furbishing their

dress, a woman who was engaged in some kind of Taylor's business, and a man who had an iron ring and chain hanging to his hand, I suppose as a punishment for some felony. You may be sure I was not a little impatient for William's return. He brought back his friend the officer in great good humour both with himself and him, for he took care to flatter his vanity, and we were admitted into the Wirts-haus; where we had some cold veal to supper, *decentish* beds, and a large quantity of excellent coffee in the morning for the value of one shilling and elevenpence English money. Though we rose at seven o'clock, owing to the delays of office we did not leave our inn till after ten. It was a mild morning, the sun shone occasionally through the patches of broken clouds and the larks regaled us with a never ceasing song. We had still the Hartz forest on our left, and crossed a very delightful valley through which our road ought to have taken us but the floods had swept away the bridge. The country through which we passed was in general pleasant and tolerably peopled, but the ways dreadful; we were often obliged to walk as in the mines at Stowey, above the ankles in water, and sometimes as high in clay. We left the town of Hartzburg on our left; it has a huge decaying castle, built upon the edge of a steep hill richly wooded and commanding a very fine prospect of hills clothed with Beech wood and a wide meadow valley through which runs a respectable river. After we left this place the roads grew worse and worse, the darkness came on, and we were near being stopped by a water [? course] when a waggon overtook us which conducted us safely to an Inn at Schazefeld, where we got a good supper, that is cold beef, indifferent soup, and cabbage, straw beds and coffee and bread and butter for 1 shilling and tenpence. In the night we had a hard frost and the first part of our yesterday's journey was very delightful; the country charming, something like the widest of the Welsh valleys, the widest and tamest, but afterwards the roads grew worse, still however we had a pleasant walk, and reached our inn at 4 in the afternoon. We had sausages and boiled milk to supper, coffee etc for 1 shilling and ninepence, we slept in company with our host and hostess, and four children, a facetious shoe-maker, a Prussian tax-gather[er] and a journeyman hat maker, who had

travelled all over Germany working a month here and a few days there, to see the world—William advised him to go to England as he was so fond of travelling. ‘England? was ist das für ein land? gehört es an dem König von Danemark? wo liegt es? nein, nein, man ist nicht ruhig darin.’ If my report does not exactly accord with the strict rules of German Grammar I hope you will be so good as to attribute it to the hat-maker. Our landlord had been in the Prussian service, a fine looking man, extremely fond of his children and seeming to be very happy with a very good tempered wife. We were struck with the extreme folly of people who draw conclusions respecting national character from the narrow limits of common observation. We have been much with German hosts and hostesses and notwithstanding the supposed identifying tendency first of national manners, and then of particular occupations, these persons appeared in every respect as if made in contrast to each other, but this will be a more proper subject for conversation. This morning was very rainy, so we got into the post-waggon, in which conveyance we travelled ten miles, and arrived at the post-haus in the afternoon. We are now at a tolerable inn but we don’t know what we have to pay; I have thus brought down the little history of our lives since Saturday morning. I now come to something of more importance, the subject of your letters—but let me first speak of the joy we felt at seeing your handwriting again; I burst open the seals and could almost have kissed them in the presence of the post-master, but we did not read a word till we got to the inn when we devoured them separately, for at least two hours. With the experience we have had of the possibility of travelling for a very trifling expense, we cannot but think that you have done wisely in quitting Ratzeberg, both on your account and that of Chester. Gottingen seems to be the best possible place for your purpose.

William now takes the pen—God bless you dear dear Coleridge.

(*W. writes*)

We must pursue a different plan. We are every hour more convinced that we are not rich enough to be introduced into high or even literary German society. We should be perfectly contented if we could find a house where there were several young

people some of whom might perhaps be always at leisure to converse with us. We do not wish to read much but should both be highly delighted to be chattering and chattered to, through the whole day. As this blessing seems to be destined for some more favoured sojourners, we must content ourselves with pshaw for the ears,—eyes for ever! We are resolved if the weather be tolerable to saunter about for a fortnight or three weeks at the end of which time you may be prepared to see us in Gottingen. I will not say to tarry long there for I do not think it would suit our plan, but to have the pleasure of seeing and conversing with you. There we can arrange everything respecting our return.

My progress in German considered with reference to literary emolument is not even as dust in the balance. If I had had opportunities of conversing I should not have cared much if I had not read a line. My hope was that I should be able to learn German as I learn'd French, in this I have been woefully deceived. I acquired more french in two months, than I should acquire German in five years living as we have lived. In short sorry I am to say it I do not consider myself as knowing *any* thing of the German language. Consider this not as spoken in modesty either false or true but in simple verity.—I cannot sufficiently thank you for your two valuable letters particularly that upon the German Poets. Of the excellence of Lessing I can form no distinct idea. My internal prejudgment concerning Wieland and Goethe (of Voss I knew nothing) were, as your letter has convinced me, the result of no *negligent* perusal of the different fragments which I had seen in England.—When I had closed my last letter to which you have replied, I recollected that I had spoken inaccurately in citing Shenstone's Schoolmistress as the character of an individual. I ought to have said of individuals representing classes. I do not so ardently desire character in poems like Burger's, as manners, not transitory manners reflecting the wearisome unintelligible obliquities of city life, but manners connected with the permanent objects of nature and partaking of the simplicity of those objects. Such pictures must interest when the original shall cease to exist. The reason will be immediately obvious if you consider yourself as lying in a valley on the side of mount Etna reading one of Theocritus's

Idylliums or on the plains of Attica with a comedy of Aristophanes in your hand.—Of Theocritus and his spirit perhaps three fourths remain, of Aristophanes a mutilated skeleton; at least I suppose so, for I never read his works but in a most villainous translation. But I may go further, read Theocritus in Ayrshire or Merionethshire and you will find perpetual occasions to recollect what you see daily in Ayrshire or Merionethshire, read Congreve Vanbrugh and Farquhar in London and though not a century has elapsed since they were alive and merry, you will meet with whole pages that are uninteresting and incomprehensible. Now I find no manners in Burger; in Burns you have manners everywhere. Tam o'Shanter I do not deem a character, I question whether there is any individual character in all Burns' writing except his own. But every where you have the presence of human life. The communications that proceed from Burns come to the mind with the life and charm of recognitions. But Burns also is energetic solemn and sublime in sentiment, and profound in feeling. His Ode to Despondency I can never read without the deepest agitation.

I shall not consume much paper in defending myself against your criticisms; in general I think them just, others might be added to them with equal propriety. For the 2 poems 'How sweet where crimson colours¹ etc. and 'One day the darling of my heart' I do not care a farthing. Of the rest we will talk when we meet. Wishing not to be in debt when I return to England I have lately been employed in hewing down Peter Bell, with another dressing I think he will do, He has risen in my esteem. Heaven knows there was need. The third part I think *interesting*, a praise which I give myself with more pleasure as I know that in general I can lay little claim to it. I also took courage to devote two days (O Wonder) to the Salisbury Plain. I am resolved to discard

¹ This poem was sent by Coleridge to Stuart (v. Letter 125, note) on Oct. 7, 1800, preceded by the words: 'I shall fill up these blanks with a few poems', and has hence been included by Dykes Campbell and E. H. Coleridge in their editions of Coleridge's Poetical Works. But this letter proves that it was perpetrated by W., and at the same period as he was writing the finest of the lyrics to Lucy. It is consoling, however, to note that he 'did not care a farthing for it'. The other poem here referred to is fortunately lost.

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Robert Walford and invent a new story for the woman. The poem is finished all but her tale. Now by way of a pretty moving accident and to bind together in palpable knots the story of the piece I have resolved to make her the widow or sister or daughter of the man whom the poor Tar murdered. So much for the vulgar. Further the Poet's invention goeth not. This is by way of giving a physical totality to the piece, which I regard as finished minus 24 stanzas, the utmost tether allowed to the poor Lady.

I had more to say, but I have not room. We think of staying here two or three days we shall then direct our course to that part of the country which seems to promise most. We are pleased with what we have seen in our travels. We intend to import into England a new invention for washing. Among other advantages which our patent will set forth we shall not fail to insist upon the immense saving which must result from our discovery which will render only one washing bason necessary for the largest family in the kingdom. We dare not trust this communication to a letter, but you shall be a partner, Chester likewise. Adieu God bless you, Dorothy's best and kindest love. We shall soon be with you.

I am afraid our writing is absolutely illegible. you see what miserable paper we have the pens and ink as bad and I have written in haste. God love you my dear very dear friend D.W. remember us to Chester.

Address: an den Herrn Coleridge, Göttingen à la Poste Restante.

MS.

93. *W. W. to Richard W.*

My address at Mr Hutchinson's
Sockburn near Northallerton
Yorkshire

May 13th [1799]

My dear Richard,

You will have heard from Kitt of our safe arrival in England. We are now at Sockburn with Mary Hutchinson. I wish you would write to me *immediately* letting me know what money you have received on my account, what you have paid into Mr Wedgwood's hands and whether you have bought into the stocks

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etc. I have not heard from Cottle about the poems but I am afraid there has been some sad mismanagement in the case, from the different accounts I have heard. Let me know what you have received for the poems and from whom. Dorothy is well, she begs her love to you.

God bless you!

Your affectionate Brother,

W. Wordsworth

If any letters come to me from Germany you will send them here. I desired Coleridge to direct to me to Staple Inn.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

M(—)

K.

94. W. W. to Joseph Cottle

My address at Mr. Hutchinson's,
Sockburn, near Northallerton,
Yorkshire,

[end of May, 1799]

My dear Cottle,

The day before I left England I wrote to you to request that you would transfer your right to the *Lyrical Ballads* to Mr. Johnson, on account of its being likely to be very advantageous to me, desiring you to draw for the money [for] which I was indebted to you upon my brother in London. I had not time to receive your answer so I do not know how the poems have been disposed of. Pray let me hear from you immediately. By means of Coleridge we have heard of you, that you are well, etc. We are now in the County of Durham, just upon the borders of Yorkshire. We have spent our time pleasantly enough in Germany, but we are right glad to find ourselves in England, for we have learnt to know its value.

We left Coleridge well at Göttingen a month ago. Dorothy joins me in kind remembrances to your mother, etc., and love to you. I am,

yours sincerely,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr. Cottle, Bookseller, Wine Street, Bristol.

JUNE 1799

MS.
Cottle¹. K.

95. W. W. to Joseph Cottle

June 2nd, [1799.]

My dear Cottle,

Owing to your letter not having the exact address I did not receive it till yesterday. I perceive that it would have been impossible for you to comply with my request respecting the *Lyrical Ballads*, as you had entered into a treaty with Arch. I still, however, regret it upon the same grounds as before: namely, that I have lost a good opportunity of connecting myself with Johnson; that I think the poems are not so likely to have a quick sale as if they were in his hands; and also that they must necessarily be separated from anything which I may hereafter publish. You ought not to have mentioned in your letter to Johnson that the poems were *sold* to you, as I had told you that I had not acquainted him with that circumstance. Can you tell me whether the poems are likely to sell? How is the copy-right to be disposed of when you quit the Bookseller's business?

We sincerely hope that you will be rich enough, and very happy after you have left the cares and confinement of shop-keeping. Does Robert succeed to you?

According to my calculations you owe me *twenty-one pounds, ten shillings*. I think you paid me 10 pounds, and I was to receive thirty *guineas*, but I owe you for paper which I purchased from you long ago; this debt you will be so good as to deduct from what you owe me, and remit the remainder to me as soon as you can. I should wish very much to know what number of the poems have been sold, and also (as, if the edition should sell, I shall probably add some others in Lieu of *The Ancyent Marinere*) what we are to do with the copyright. I repeat this that it may not be overlooked when you write to me.

¹ In Cottle (ii. 24) this letter begins I perceive . . . Arch—then goes on How is the copy-right to be disposed of when you quit the bookselling business? We were much amused with the 'Anthology'. Your poem of the 'Killcrop' we liked better than any; only we regretted that you did not save the poor little innocent's life, by some benevolent art or other. You might have managed a little pathetic incident, in which nature appearing forcibly in the child, might have worked in some way or other, upon its superstitious destroyer. After destroyer he concludes the letter We have spent etc. (v. previous letter). Cottle must therefore have combined three letters. For the passage about the 'Anthology' and 'Killcrop', Cottle is the only authority.

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We are glad to hear that the printing business succeeds so well. It gave us much pain to hear of the increase of your lameness. You must live in the country, if possible, when you are no longer imprisoned in Wine Street. Dorothy sends her best love to you. God bless you, my dear Cottle. Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

Wm. Wordsworth.

P.S.—If you cannot very soon remit to me the whole of the money, be so good as to send me five £ and remit the rest as soon as you can to my Brother in Staple Inn.

My address is, at Mr. Hutchinson's, Sockburn, near Northallerton, Yorkshire. To be left at Enter common.

I am afraid I cannot have any copies of my poems without paying for them; most likely you did not reserve to yourself the disposal of a portion of them.

I should wish to make a present of three to three of my friends. Tell me if they are to be procured, and how—. God bless you, dear Cottle.

W. Wordsworth.

MS.
K.

96. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

Sockburn, near Northallerton, Yorkshire,
to be left at Smeaton.

24th June [1799]

My dear Cottle,

I received your letter enclosing a 5£ Bank note. I am in want of money. I shall therefore be obliged to you if you will remit to *me* (not to my Brother as I before requested) the remaining 15£ as soon as you can without inconvenience. Most probably your statement is accurate; for myself I recollect nothing about it. What I told you was from Dorothy's memory, and she is by no means certain about it.

You tell me the poems have not sold ill. If it is possible, I should wish to know *what number* have been sold. From what I can gather it seems that *The Ancyent Marinere* has upon the whole been an injury to the volume, I mean that the old words

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and the strangeness of it have deterred readers from going on. If the volume should come to a second edition I would put in its place some little things which would be more likely to suit the common taste.

When you send the money pray look over this letter and reply to this part of it.

I shall be obliged to you if you will send me three copies of the Ballads, enclosed in your parcel to Charles Lloyd. I shall easily get them from Penrith.

We are highly gratified by the affectionate wish which you express to see us again in Somersetshire. We are as yet not determined where we shall settle; we have no particular house in view, so it is impossible for us to say where we shall have the pleasure of meeting you.

Dorothy sends her very kind love to you. God bless you, my dear Cottle.

Your affectionate F^d
W. Wordsworth.

We thank you for your care of our box. We do not at present want any of its contents.

P.S.—We have never heard from Coleridge since our arrival in England—we are anxious for news of him. I hope he is coming home as he does not write to us.

MS. 97. D. W. to Thomas Poole
K.

Sockburn, July 4th [1799]

My dear Mr. Poole,

Ever since our arrival in England it has been William's intention to write to you, yet his delaying disposition has so got the better of him that though we have been two months on English ground you have heard nothing of us from ourselves. Knowing how much you are interested in our welfare I can no longer refrain from taking up the pen to inform you *where* we are, and that we are in good health. We found living in Germany, with the enjoyment of any tolerable advantages, much more expensive than we expected, which determined us to come home

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with the first tolerable weather of the Spring. We left Coleridge and Mr. Chester at Göttingen ten weeks ago, as you probably have heard, and proceeded with as little delay as possible, travelling in a German Diligence to Hamburgh, whence we went down the Elbe in a boat to Cuxhaven, where we were not detained longer than we wished for our necessary refreshment, and we had an excellent passage to England of two days and nights. We proceeded immediately from Yarmouth into the North, where we are now staying with some of our early friends at a pleasant farm on the Banks of the Tees. We are very anxious to hear from Coleridge,—he promised to write us from Göttingen, and though we have written twice we have heard nothing of him. We hope that having delayed writing to us longer than he intended, he now delays because he is on the point of returning to England. When we were at Göttingen he received a letter from Mrs. Coleridge, by which we had the pleasure of hearing that she and dear little Hartley were well. Poor Berkeley!¹ I was much grieved to hear of his death. It gave us sincere joy to learn from Coleridge that your good mother was in better health three months ago than she had ever been for some time. I hope that we shall again have the same good accounts of her. We are yet quite undetermined where we shall reside—we have no house in view at present. It is William's wish to be near a good library, and if possible in a pleasant country. If you hear of any place in your neighbourhood that will be likely to suit us, we shall be much obliged to you if you will take the trouble of writing to us.

We are very glad to hear that Mr. Wedgwood is going to settle not far from Stowey.

William joins with me in kind remembrances to your Mother, and Mrs. Coleridge, and yourself.

I will not make any apology for this short and unentertaining letter. I know you will not receive it without pleasure. Believe me, my dear sir,

Yours affectionately,
Dorothy Wordsworth.

¹ Coleridge's second child, born at Nether Stowey, May 1798, died Feb. 1799.

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Pray remember us to Mr. Ward, and request Coleridge to write when he arrives at Stowey.

Our address is at Mr. Hutchinson's, Sockburn, near Northalerton, Yorkshire. To be left at Smeaton.

Address: Mr. Thomas Poole, Nether Stowey, Bridgewater, Somersetshire.

K(—) 98. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

Sockburn, 27th July, [Postmark, 1799.]

My dear Cottle,

I thank you for your draft, which I received on Friday evening. . . . I am not poor enough yet to make me think it right that I should take interest for a debt from a friend, paid eleven months after it is due. If I were in want, I should make no scruple in applying to you for twice that sum. I should be very glad to hear so good an account of the sale of the *Lyrical Ballads*, if I were not afraid that your wish to give pleasure, and your proneness to self-deception, had made you judge too favourably. I am told they have been reviewed in *The Monthly Review*,¹ but I have not heard in what style. . . . God bless you, my dear Cottle.—Believe me, your very affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

P.S.—My aversion from publication increases every day, so much so, that no motives whatever, nothing but pecuniary necessity, will, I think, ever prevail upon me to commit myself to the press again. . . .

K. 99. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

Sockburn, 1799.

My dear Cottle,

. . . Southey's review² I have seen. He knew that I published those poems for money and money alone. He knew that money

¹ *The Monthly Review* for May 1799 contained a very prosaic but not wholly unfavourable criticism of the *L.B.* Its chief complaints were directed against the 'gloom' of many of the poems, and their implied criticism of the social system. It concludes: 'So much genius and originality are discovered in this publication, that we wish to see another from the same hand, written on more elevated subjects and in a more cheerful disposition.'

² In the *Critical Review* for Oct. 1798, of *The Idiot Boy* he says: 'No tale

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was of importance to me. If he could not conscientiously have spoken differently of the volume, he ought to have declined the task of reviewing it.

The bulk of the poems he has described as destitute of merit. Am I recompensed for this by vague praises of my talents? I care little for the praise of any other professional critic, but as it may help me to pudding. . . . Believe me, dear Cottle, your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

MS. 100. *W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.*

20th August [1799], Sockburn.

Dear Richard,

I hoped that I should have been able to have written to you before this time. I have not yet been able to bring matters with Montagu to a regular settlement. I expect a letter from him which I hope will be decisive. I shall then write at length. I have enclosed a bill for 10£ which I wish you would have the goodness to pass into the hands of Mr Wedgwood's bankers with the rest of the money which you have received on my account since I went into Germany.—I hope to be able to write to you soon at length.

I am your affectionate Br
W. Wordsworth.

When you acknowledge the receipt of the bill be kind enough to set down the sums you have received on my account: I should like to have an account of all that you have received and paid for me, and of my former debts to you. I expected that there might have been enough to have left the sum of 300£ to buy into

less deserved the labour that appears to have been bestowed on this, it resembles a Flemish picture in the worthlessness of its design and excellence of its execution . . . the other ballads of this kind are as bald in story, and are not so highly embellished in narration. . . . With *The Thorn* we are altogether displeased. The experiment has failed not because the language of conversation is little adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure, but because it has been tried on uninteresting subjects.' Of *Tintern Abbey* Southey approves, but he concludes by lamenting that W. 'should have condescended to write such pieces as *The Last of the Flock*, and most of the ballads'.

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the stocks, will you have the goodness to send me a regular statement of the whole? I hope soon to be in a condition when I shall have no more occasion to trouble you. I have received 30 guineas from Cottle, as part of payment for my book.

My dear Richard,

I have for some time expected impatiently to hear of John's arrival in England—pray let us know as soon as you hear of him. God bless you!

Your affect^e Sister

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Attorney, Staple Inn, London.

101. W. W. to Joseph Cottle

Cottle (—) K(—)

Sockburn, September 2, 1799.

. . . [He urges him to pay a visit to the North of England.] If you come down I will accompany you on your tour. Write to me beforehand. You will come by Greta Bridge, which is about twenty miles from this place. Thither Dorothy and I will go to meet you. Dorothy will return to Sockburn, and after we have seen all the curiosities of that neighbourhood, I will accompany you into Cumberland and Westmoreland. . . . God bless you, dear Cottle.

W. W.

MS.

102. D. W. to Richard W.

Sockburn September 3rd [1799]

My dear Richard,

On this day fortnight Mr John Hutchinson of Stockton being here Wm gave him a bill for 15. 18. 6 to get cashed at the Stockton Bank, and at the same time he wrote a letter to you which Mr H. was to take to Stockton and in which he was to enclose 10£ of the 15. 18. 6, which 10£ Wm requested you to pay into the hands of Mr Wedgwood's Banker. The remaining part of the bill, 5. 18. 6 Mr J. Hutchinson was to pay William the next time of his coming to Sockburn. Wm has not seen him since, but as there is no doubt of his sending the money off punctually

SEPTEMBER 1799

I am uneasy that you have not acknowledged the receipt of it. Pray write as soon as you receive this and do not fail to send William the accounts which he requested of you, both of what money you have received and paid, and all his debts to you.

The day after William's letter to you was sent off we heard of John's arrival in England, but no particulars; we have since anxiously expected news of him. Why did you not write to inform us of his arrival and where to address to him? We should have known nothing of it to this day but from an accidental circumstance. I want much to write to him, and should have written before to inquire his address but I fully depended upon your letter acknowledging the receipt of the bill which I thought would bring the other news. If he is in London give our best love to him and request him to write to me. I long to know what kind of a voyage he has made etc. etc. I was heartily rejoiced to hear of his safe arrival.

William has been unwell lately—he is sadly troubled with a pain in his side. Kitt I suppose is at Birmingham¹ at present. I had a letter from him about three weeks ago—he had just left Forncett. He talked of going to London, if so you would see him. William sends his love to you. God bless you my dear Brother

Believe me your affect^e Sister

D. Wordsworth

You must address Wm at Mr Hutchinson's Sockburn near Northallerton (To be left at Smeaton).

You will not fail to write by the next post.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Attorney, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

K(—)

103.² *W. W. to D. W.*

[Grasmere November 7, 1799.]

. . . We left Cottle, as you know, at Greta Bridge. We were obliged to take the Mail over Stainmore, the road interesting with sun and mist. At Temple Sowerby I learned from the address of a letter lying on the table with the Cambridge post-

¹ With the Lloyds.

² Written on same sheet as a letter of Coleridge to D. W. W. W. and C. were at Grasmere Nov. 3-7.

NOVEMBER 1799

mark, the letter from Kit to Mrs C. that he was gone to Cambridge. I learned also from the woman that John was at Newbiggin. I sent a note; he came, looks very well. Your uncle has left you £100, nobody else was named in his will. Having learnt our plans [John] said he would accompany us a few days. Next day Thursday¹ we set off, and dined at Mr. Myers; thence to Bampton, where we slept. On Friday proceeded along the lake of Hawes-water (a noble scene which pleased us much.) The mists hung so low upon the mountains that we could not go directly over to Ambleside, so went over by Long Sleddale to Kentmere. Next to Troutbeck, and thence by Rayrigg, and Bowness; a rainy and raw day, did not stop at Bowness but went on to the ferry, a cold passage, were much disgusted with the new erections and objects about Windermere; thence to Hawkshead—great change amongst the People since we were last there. Next day Sunday by Rydal and the road by which we approached G. to Robert Newton's, C. enchanted with Grasmere and Rydal. At Robt. Newton's we have remained till to-day. John left us on Tuesday; we walked with him to the Tarn. This day was a fine one, and we had some grand mountain scenery; the rest of the week has been bad weather. Yesterday we set off with a view of going to Dungeon Ghyll, the day so bad forced to return. The evening before last we walked to the upper waterfall at Rydal, and saw it through the gloom, and it was very magnificent. C. was much struck with Grasmere and its neighbourhood and I have much to say to you. You will think my plan a mad one, but I have thought of building a house there by the Lake side. John would give me £40 to buy the ground and for £250 I am sure I could build one as good as we can wish. I speak with tolerable certainty on this head as a Devonshire gentleman has built a cottage there which cost £180 that would exactly suit us every way but the size of the bedrooms; we shall talk of this. We shall go to Buttermere the day after tomorrow but I think it will be full ten days before we shall see you. There is a small house at Grasmere empty which we might take, but of this we will speak. But I shall write again when I know more on this subject.

W. W.

¹ October 31.

DECEMBER 1799

MS.

104. D. W. to Richard W.

Saturday Sockburn December 14th [1799]

My dear Richard,

William has desired me to inform you that he drew upon you on Wednesday evening for 15£ 17^s payable to Mr Richard Dixon or Bearer at two months after date and for 30£ payable to Messrs Hutchinson or Bearer at 40 days after date. He hopes that the shorter date will not be inconvenient to you. He has written to Mr Pinney to request him to exert himself with Montagu for the payment of the Principal, and he has reason for good hopes that he will succeed. We shall set off for Grasmere on Tuesday. Tom Hutchinson will accompany us on horseback as far as Greta Bridge, where we shall take the coach for Brough, and from there we shall be obliged to take a post-chaise to Kendal.¹ As soon as we are settled William will write to you at length. God bless you my dear Brother. Believe me

Your affectionate Sister

D. Wordsworth.

If you have occasion to write before you hear from us direct at Grasmere near Ambleside Westmorland.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

105. W. W. to S. T. Coleridge²

K(—)

Christmas Eve, Grasmere (1799).

My dearest Coleridge,

We arrived here last Friday, and have now been four days in our new abode without writing to you, a long time! but we have been in such confusion as not to have had a moment's leisure. We found two Letters from you one of which I had heard of at Sockburne. I do not think there is much cause to be uneasy about Cooke's affair, but as he has not answered my Letter I

¹ This plan was not carried out; *v.* next letter.

² A draft of part of this letter exists, with a few unimportant verbal variants.

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cannot say but I am sorry I mentioned your name; feeling so forcibly as I did that, if any man had reason to suppose I could be of service to him, he would gain incalculably by the proposed change, I was betrayed into language not sufficiently considerate and reserved. If it is in my power to remedy any part of the evil by writing again to Cooke, or in any other way, pray mention it to me.

I arrived at Sockburn the day after you quitted it, I scarcely knew whether to be sorry or no that you were no longer there, as it would have been a great pain to me to have parted from you. I was sadly disappointed in not finding Dorothy; Mary was a solitary house-keeper and overjoyed to see me. D is now sitting by me racked with the tooth-ache. This is a grievous misfortune as she has so much work for her needle among the bedcurtains, etc. that she is absolutely buried in it.¹ We have both caught troublesome colds in our new and almost empty house, but we hope to make it a comfortable dwelling. Our first two days were days of fear as one of the rooms upstairs smoked like a furnace, we have since learned that it is uninhabitable as a sitting room on this account; the other room however which is fortunately the one we intended for our *living* room promises uncommonly well; that is, the chimney draws perfectly, and does not even smoke at the first lighting of the fire. In particular winds most likely we shall have *puffs* of *inconvenience*, but this I believe will be found a curable evil, by means of devils as they are called and other beneficent agents which we shall station at the top of the chimney if their services should be required. D is much pleased with the house and *appurtenances*, the orchard especially; in imagination she has already built a seat with a summer shed on the highest platform in this our little domestic slip of mountain. The spot commands a view over the roof of our house, of the lake, the church, helm cragg, and two thirds of the vale. We mean also to enclose the two or three yards of ground between us and the road, this for the sake of a few flowers, and because it will make it more our own. Besides, am I fanciful

¹ buried in it: *Draft goes on* My dear Friend, we talk of you perpetually, and for me I see you everywhere. But let me be a little more methodical. *The next few pages are not in the Draft, which goes on* We left Sockburne.

when I would extend the obligation of gratitude to insensate things? May not a man have a salutary pleasure in doing something gratuitously for the sake of his house, as for an individual to which he owes so much—The manners of the neighbouring cottagers have far exceeded our expectations; they seem little adulterated; indeed as far as we have seen not at all. The people we have uniformly found kind-hearted frank and manly, prompt to serve without servility. This is but an experience of four days, but we have had dealings with persons of various occupations, and have had no reason whatever to complain. We do not think it will be necessary for us to keep a servant. We have agreed to give a woman, who lives in one of the adjoining cottages two shillings a week for attending two or three hours a day to light the fires wash dishes, etc., etc. In addition to this she is to have her victuals every Saturday when she will be employed in scouring, and to have her victuals likewise on other days if we should have visitors and she is wanted more than usual. We could have had this attendance for eighteen pence a week but we added the sixpence for the sake of the poor woman, who is made happy by it. The weather since our arrival has been a keen frost, one morning two thirds of the lake was covered with ice which continued all the day but, to our great surprize, the next morning, though there was no intermission of the frost, had entirely disappeared. The ice had been so thin that the wind had broken it up, and most likely driven it to the outlet of the lake. Rydale is covered with ice, clear as polished steel, I have procured a pair of skates and to-morrow mean to give my body to the wind,—not however without reasonable caution. We are looking for John every day; it will [be] a pity, if he should come, that D is so much engaged, she has scarcely been out since our arrival; one evening I tempted her forth; the planet Jupiter was on the top of the hugest of the Rydale mountains, but I had reason to repent of having seduced her from her work as she returned with a raging tooth-ache.—We were highly pleased with your last short letter, which we had confidently and eagerly expected at Sockburn. Stuart's conduct is liberal and I hope it will answer for him. You make no mention of your health. I was uneasy on that account when you were with us; upon

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recollection it seemed to me that the fatigues, accidents, and exposures attendant upon our journey, took greater hold of you than they ought to have done had your habit of body been such as not to render caution necessary for it. Your account of Pinney is not more than I should have expected as I know him to be an excellent man. I received a Letter from him enclosing a five-pound note, and informing me he hoped soon to be able to render me more substantial assistance. I wrote to him requesting him to use all his interest to induce M. to repay the principal, etc., and that if it was his intention to do anything to disentangle M. from his embarrassments, I recommended to him to consider my claim.—We shall be glad to receive the German books though it will be at least 3 weeks before D will have any leisure to begin.—Your selection of names in your history of the eminent men with whom you dined entertained me much, a wretched Painter, a worse Philosopher, and a respectable bone-setter. This last I mention merely for the sake of eking out my sentence, as I venerate the profession of a Surgeon, and deem it the only one which has anything that deserves the name of utility in it.—I suspect that it may partly be owing to something like unconscious affectation, but in honest truth I feel little disposed to notice what you say of Lyrical Ballads though the account when I first read it gave me pleasure. The said Mr. G. I have often heard described as a puppy, one of the fawning, flattering kind; in short, a polite liar, often perhaps without knowing himself to be so. Accordingly he would snatch at an opportunity of saying anything agreeable to your friend, etc; ergo, the account is smoke or something near it. You do not speak of your travelling conversations, I have begun the pastoral of Bowman:¹ in my next letter I shall probably be able to send it to you. I am afraid it will have one fault, that of being too long.—As to the Tragedy and Peter Bell, D will do all in her power to put them forward. Composition I find invariably pernicious to me, and even penmanship if continued for any length of time at one sitting. I shall therefore wish you good

¹ Bowman: the name of the youth called James Ewbank in *The Brothers*. On the previous Nov. 12, W. had been with C. at Ennerdale, and there heard of Bowman's tragic fall.

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night, my beloved friend, a wish, with a thousand others, in which D joins me. I am afraid half of what I have written is illegible, farewell.

Friday Evg: We have been overhead in confusion, painting the rooms, mending the doors, and heaven knows what! This however shall not prevent me from attempting to give you some account of our journey hither. We left Sockburne tuesday before last early in the morning, D. on a double horse, behind that good creature George, and I upon Lilly, or Violet as Cottle calls her. We cross'd the Tees in the Sockburn fields by moonlight.¹ George accompanied us eight miles beyond Richmond and there we parted with sorrowful hearts. We were now in Wensley dale and D. and I set off side by side to foot it as far as Kendal. A little before sunset we reached one of the waterfalls of which I read you a short description in Mr Taylor's tour. I meant to have attempted to give you a picture of it but I feel myself too lazy to execute the task. Tis a singular scene; such a performance as you might have expected from some giant gardiner employed by one of Queen Elizabeth's Courtiers, if this same giant gardiner had consulted with Spenser and they two had finish'd the work together. By this you will understand that with something of vastness or grandeur it is at once formal and wild. We reach'd the town of Askrigg, 12 miles, about six in the evening, having walked the last three miles in the dark and two of them over hard-frozen road to the great annoyance of our feet and ancles. Next

¹ *Draft goes on:* and after ten good miles riding came in sight of the Swale. It is there a beautiful river, with its green bank and flat holms scattered over [with] trees, four miles further brought us to Richmond with its huge ivied castle, its friarage steeple, its castle tower resembling a huge steeple, and two other steeple towers for such they appeared to us. Before we entered this venerable town, for it almost deserves the name, in a beautiful bottom beside the Swale, we saw a mansion of antique appearance which excited our curiosity. I met a little girl and pointing towards the place I asked her who lived in that house. 'Oh Sir we lives there'—her own Dwelling was at a small distance in a line between me and the great mansion. 'But the house in the valley overgrown (perhaps I said covered) with ivy, what is it?' 'Oh Sir, them's only old Bules.' 'Old Bules said I, what are they?' 'Old Buildings Sir,' answered the girl smiling. This little incident put us in good humour with Richmond, and perhaps the ghostly arch at the bottom of its tall friarage steeple, a single tower that stands in a green by itself, appeared more interesting than it really is. The situation of this place resembles that of Barnard Castle, but I should suppose is somewhat inferior to it.

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morning the earth was thinly covered with snow, enough to make the road soft and prevent its being slippery. On leaving Askrigg we turned aside to see another waterfall—'twas a beautiful morning with driving snow-showers that disappeared by fits, and unveiled the east which was all one delicious pale orange colour. After walking through two fields we came to a mill which we pass'd and in a moment a sweet little valley opened before us, with an area of grassy ground, and a stream dashing over various lamina of black rocks close under a bank covered with firs. The bank and stream on our left, another woody bank on our right, and the flat meadow in front, from which, as at Buttermere, the stream had retired as it were to hide itself under the shade. As we walked up this delightful valley we were tempted to look back perpetually on the brook which reflected the orange light of the morning among the gloomy rocks with a brightness varying according to the agitation of the current. The steeple of Askrigg was between us and the east, at the bottom of the valley ; it was not a quarter of a mile distant, but oh ! how far we were from it. The two banks seemed to join before us with a facing of rock common to them both, when we reached this point the valley opened out again, two rocky banks on each side, which, hung with ivy and moss and fringed luxuriantly with brushwood, ran directly parallel to each other and then approaching with a gentle curve, at their point of union presented a lofty waterfall, the termination of the valley. 'Twas a keen frosty morning, showers of snow threatening us but the sun bright and active ; we had a task of twenty one miles to perform in a short winter's day, all this put our minds in such a state of excitation that we were no unworthy spectators of this delightful scene. On a nearer approach the water seemed to fall down a tall arch or rather nitch which had shaped itself by insensible moulderings in the wall of an old castle. We left this spot with reluctance but highly exhilarated. When we had walked about a mile and a half we overtook two men with a string of ponies and some empty carts. I recommended to D. to avail herself of this opportunity of husbanding her strength, we rode with them more than two miles, twas bitter cold, the wind driving the snow behind us in the best stile of a mountain storm. We soon reached an Inn at

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a place called Hardraw, and descending from our vehicles, after warming ourselves by the cottage fire we walked up the brook side to take a view of a *third* waterfall. We had not gone above a few hundred yards between two winding rocky banks before we came full upon it. It appeared to throw itself in a narrow line from a lofty wall of rock; the water which shot manifestly to some distance from the rock seeming from the extreme height of the fall to be dispersed before it reached the bason, into a thin shower of snow that was toss'd about like snow blown from the roof of a house. We were disappointed in the cascade though the introductory and accompanying banks were a noble mixture of grandeur and beauty. We walked up to the fall and what would I not give if I could convey to you the images and feelings which were then communicated to me. After cautiously sounding our way over stones of all colours and sizes encased in the clearest ice formed by the spray of the waterfall, we found the rock which before had seemed a perpendicular wall extending itself over us like the cieling of a huge cave; from the summit of which the water shot directly over our heads into a bason and among fragments of rock wrinkled over with masses of ice, white as snow, or rather as D. says like congealed froth. The water fell at least ten yards from us and we stood directly behind it, the excavation not so deep in the rock as to impress any feeling of darkness, but lofty and magnificent, and in connection with the adjoining banks excluding as much of the sky as could well be spared from a scene so exquisitely beautiful. The spot where we stood was as dry as the chamber in which I am now sitting, and the incumbent rock of which the groundwork was limestone veined and dappled with colours which melted into each other in every possible variety. On the summit of the cave were three festoons or rather wrinkles in the rock which ran parallel to each other like the folds of a curtain when it is drawn up; each of them was hung with icicles of various length, and nearly in the middle of the festoons in the deepest valley made by their waving line the stream shot from between the rows of icicles in irregular fits of strength and with a body of water that momentarily varied. Sometimes it threw itself into the bason in one continued curve, sometimes it was interrupted almost midway in its fall and, being

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blown¹ towards us, part of the water fell at no great distance from our feet like the heaviest thunder shower. In such a situation you have at every moment a feeling of the presence of the sky. Above the highest point of the waterfall large fleecy clouds drove over our heads and the sky appeared of a blue more than usually brilliant. The rocks on each side, which, joining with the sides of the cave, formed the vista² of the brook were checquered with three diminutive waterfalls or rather veins of water each of which was a miniature of all that summer and winter can produce of a delicate beauty. The rock in the centre of these falls where the water was most abundant, deep black, the adjoining parts yellow white purple violet and dovecolour'd; or covered with water-plants of the most vivid green, and hung with streams and fountains of ice and icicles that in some places seemed to conceal the verdure of the plants and the variegated colours of the rocks and in some places to render their hues more splendid. I cannot express to you the enchanted effect produced by this Arabian scene of colour as the wind blew aside the great waterfall behind which we stood and hid and revealed each of these faery cataracts in irregular succession or displayed them with various gradations of distinctness, as the intervening spray was thickened or dispersed.—In the luxury of our imaginations we could not help feeding on the pleasure which in the heat of a July noon this cavern would spread through a frame exquisitely sensible. That huge rock of ivy on the right, the bank winding round on the left with all its living foliage, and the breeze stealing up the valley and bedewing the cavern with the faintest imaginable spray. And then the murmur of the water, the quiet, the seclusions, and a long summer day to dream in!³—Have I not tired you? With difficulty we tore ourselves away, and on returning to the cottage we found we had been absent an hour. Twas a short one to us, we were in high spirits, and off we drove, and will you believe me when I tell you that we walked the next ten miles, by the watch over a high mountain road, thanks to the wind that drove behind us and the good road, in two hours and a quarter, a marvellous feat of which D. will long tell. Well! we rested in a tempting inn, close by Garsdale chapel, a lowly house

¹ MS. blowing.

² MS. visto.

³ Here the draft ends.

CHRISTMAS EVE 1799

of prayer in a charming little valley, here we stopp'd a quarter of an hour and then off to Sedbergh, 7 miles farther, in an hour and thirty-five minutes, the wind was still at our backs and the road delightful. I must hurry on, next morning we walked to Kendal, 11 miles, a terrible up and down road, in 3 hours, and after buying and ordering furniture, the next day by half past four we reached Grasmere in a post chaise. So ends my long story. God bless you, W. W.

Write soon I pray you. God bless you. My Love to Mrs. Coleridge and a kiss for Hartley.

D. W.

(*W. adds*) Take no pains to contradict the story that the L.B. are entirely yours. Such a rumour is the best thing that can befall them. Poor Cottle! of this enough.

Address: Mr Coleridge, No. 21 Buckingham Street, Strand, London.

MS.

106. W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere, March 11 [1800]

Dear Rich^d

John begs that you would be so good as to send him 20£ by return of post, he is sorry to trouble you with this Letter but when he wrote last he did not think he should want this money so soon. John and Dorothy are both well, and I am tolerable. I hope to be able shortly to write something satisfactory upon the subject of Montagu. Pinney has undertaken to pay the annuity.

Your affectionate Br

W. Wordsworth

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

107. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 11th April [1800]

My dear Richard,

Mr Cooke has been with us three days. Coleridge and John are also here so our cottage is quite full. Mary Hutchinson has been

APRIL 1800

with us five weeks but she has left us a week ago. I write to inform you that Coleridge has desired some things to be sent to your Chambers which Wm begs you will forward along with your old clothes. They must be sent by the Kendal waggon directed to be forwarded to Grasmere.

If in the course of a week you receive a parcel from Montagu let it be enclosed in the box; if not send it off without it.

Wm and John send their kind remembrances

Yours affectly D. Wordsworth

Upon second thoughts we desire you will not wait for Montagu's parcel but send the box immediately. Mr Cooke sends his kind respects to you.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Attorney, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

108. W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere May¹ 8th 1800

My dear Richard,

I enclose M[ontagu]'s and Douglas's joint note for the 200£. I think it by all means desirable that you should accept 100£ which Douglas is ready to pay, and discharge him from any obligation for the other 100£. But before you part with this note you must make a point of receiving from Montagu some security or other for the remaining 100 as this note is the sole acknowledgment or security I have for that sum. I shall write to Montagu by this post requesting him to exert himself to procure me a satisfactory security; if he is unable to do this you must accept his note which will be as good as the present which we part with.

I drew upon you on the 1st of May for 25£ 18s to be paid 40 days after date to Mr. Thomas Ladyman or order.

We duly received the 20£ note and one for 10£ for John.

The first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* is sold off, and another is called for by the Booksellers, for the right of printing 2 editions, of 750 each of this vol. of poems, and of printing two editions, one of 1000 and another of 750 of another volume of the same size,

¹ May: D. W.'s Journal proves that this date should be *June*.

MAY 1800

I am offered by Longman 80£. I think I shall accept the offer as if the books sell quickly I shall soon have the right of going to market with them again when their merit will be known, and if they do not sell tolerably Longman will have given enough for them.

I returned yesterday: John will be here tomorrow or next day, he was well when I left him at Greta Bridge yesterday; he stayed to see the country in that neighbourhood. If Cooke be returned pray take care to remember me affectionately to him, and let him know I shall write to him shortly. Dorothy is well. Best love

Your affectionate Br
W. Wordsworth.

Are we likely to see you in the North this summer?

P.S. As you do not mention the draft for 25. 18 in your letter to John I am afraid Ladyman has neglected to send up for acceptance, though I ordered him *to take care to do so immediately*. I did not write to apprise you of this draft as I was unwilling to put you to the expense of a Letter.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 109. *W. W. to Humphry Davy*¹
*Hale White*². *K.*

Grasmere near Ambleside, Tuesday 28 July, [1800]

This letter is directed to Mr Davy.

Dear Sir,

So I venture to address you though I have not the happiness of being personally known to you. You would greatly oblige

¹ Humphry Davy (1778–1829) from boyhood was a great lover of poetry, and in his youth composed many verses and ballads. But his chief interest was experimental science. In 1795, apprenticed to a surgeon's dispensary, he became a chemist, and in 1798 joined Dr. Beddoes at the Pneumatic Institution at Bristol, founded to investigate the medical powers of airs and gases. Here he met Coleridge and became his friend. In 1801 he was assistant lecturer in Chemistry at the Royal Institution, and director of the Chemical Laboratory, and in 1803 F.R.S.; in 1812 he was knighted and in 1820 was Pres. R.S.

² Hale White: *A Description of the Wordsworth and Coleridge Manuscripts in the possession of Mr. T. Norton Longman*, ed. with notes by W. Hale White, 1897.

JULY 1800

me by looking over the enclosed poems¹ and correcting any thing you find amiss in the punctuation a business at which I am ashamed to say I am no adept. I was unwilling to print from the Mss. which Coleridge left in your hands, because as I had not looked them over I was afraid that some lines might be omitted or mistranscribed. I write to request that you would have the goodness to look over the proof-sheets of the 2nd volume before they are finally struck off. In future I mean to send the Mss. to Biggs and Cottle with a request that along with the proof-sheets they may be sent to you.

Coleridge left us last Wednesday. Mrs. C. and Hartley followed on Thursday. I hope they will both be pleased with their situation. From a note sent by Coleridge yesterday I learn that Mr. Biggs is prepared to print the 2nd vol:. In order that no time may be lost I have sent off this Letter which shall be followed by others every post day, viz. three times a week, till the whole is completed. You will be so good as to put the enclosed Poems into Mr. Biggs hands as soon as you have looked them over in order that the printing may be commenced immediately. The preface for the first vol: shall be sent in a few days.

Remember me most affectionately to Tobin. I need not say how happy I should be to see you both in my little cabin.

I remain with great respect and kind feelings

Yours sincerely

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Davy, Superintendent of the Pneumatic Institution, Bristol.

MS.

110. D. W. to Jane Marshall

K(—)

[Grasmere] Wednesday morn, September 10th [1800]

My dear Jane,

I will say nothing of my sorrow and remorse for having neglected you so long; you know that I have always been an irregular correspondent, perpetually warring against habits of procrastination, and still submitting to them, and you know

¹ The *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800.

much of me and of my character and disposition ; so I trust you will not find it difficult to withdraw that harsh insinuation that I might have become indifferent to you. Professions are idle and useless ; you are disposed to love and to forgive me and I feel that I must trust to those kindly dispositions for your *entire* pardon.

I shall dismiss this subject. In my firm confidence in your affection for me, I trust that all such subjects as are most interesting and most pleasing to me will be so to you and that you will be glad to turn your thoughts from what must be painful to us both.

At a quarter past eight yesterday morning Molly put your letter into my hands. I read the first sentence of it with extreme joy for it informed me that your husband was the bearer of it. Without reading one word more I despatched a little girl with a note requesting that he would come and breakfast with us, and as soon as William was dressed he followed her to the Inn. Mr. Marshall had, however, breakfasted. It grieved me very much that I had not seen him pass the door. I was just going to make breakfast, and, busy about something or other, I had not heard the horse's feet.

Before his arrival I had read and reread your letter, and believe me, most glad should I have been if you had told me ten times as much about your children, those dear little dear creatures. I wish I could see them, and I do hope that before next autumn is over I may have that pleasure. We meditate a journey to the neighbourhood of Scarborough to see our friends the Hutchinsons who are settled there ; we shall then extend our journey further and stop with you at Leeds. Our plan is to purchase a taxed cart, which we can have for 7 guineas, and hire a horse, if we cannot afford to buy one, but this being altogether a very grand scheme a large sum will be necessary to execute it, and it will depend entirely upon William's success with the booksellers.

How fat your husband looks ! if I had met him in the lane I should not have known him. We enjoyed his company very much yesterday, and wish exceedingly that he could have stayed another day with us. We could have taken him today to a very fine valley and waterfall which he has never seen, and still we should have left enough unseen to induce him to come again.

Yesterday morning after we had sat together half an hour, my Brothers accompanied Mr. M. round the two lakes, Rydale and Grasmere, by which means he saw them in many new points of view and in much greater beauty than he had seen them before. I was left at home to make pies and dumplings, and was to follow them wh[en] I had finished my business; but as they could not tell exactly which way they should go I sought them in vain, and after we had all walked far enough to get very good appetites we met together at two o'clock at our own house to dinner. After dinner, Wm and Mr. Marshall and I rowed over the water to the island, the lake was very rough but upon the whole the day was fine. We returned to tea, and after tea John and Mr. M. and I walked up to the head of our vale, which makes one small green, retired, woody valley where the lake is not to be seen. I never had more pleasure in accompanying anyone to see these places than Mr. M., he seemed to enjoy them so much, and from the excessively accurate ideas which he had of the relative situations of places we knew that they had in former times been deeply impressed upon his mind. William was not quite well which was the reason that he [did] not walk with us in the evening. He is better this morning and he and John are gone with Mr. M. to Keswick, they will leave their horses at Wytheburn and go on the other side of Thurlemere Water. They will dine with Coleridge at Keswick, and my Brothers will both accompany Mr. M. to Buttermere, Ennerdale, and Wasdale if Wm's horse can manage it, but it is lame and we do not know how it will perform the journey—if Wm cannot go on he will return to-morrow morning and John is to proceed with Mr. M. I wished exceedingly to go along with them but we could not manage it.

Mr. Marshall will give you a fuller description than I can by letter of our dwelling and our manner of life; but I will not keep back what I have to tell you from the fear that you may hear it twice over, as that will not I know be tiresome to you. We are daily more delighted with Grasmere, and its neighbourhood; our walks are perpetually varied, and we are more fond of the mountains as our acquaintance with them increases. We have a boat upon the lake and a small orchard and a smaller *garden* which

as it is the work of our own hands we regard with pride and partiality. This garden we enclosed from the road and pulled down a fence which formerly divided it from the orchard. The orchard is very small, but then it is a delightful one from its retirement, and the excessive beauty of the prospect from it. Our cottage is quite large enough for us though very small, and we have made it neat and comfortable within doors, and it looks very nice on the outside, for though the roses and honeysuckles which we have planted against it are only of this year's growth, yet it is covered all over with green leaves and scarlet flowers, for we have trained scarlet beans upon threads, which are not only exceedingly beautiful, but very useful, as their produce is immense. The only objection we have to our house is that it is rather too near the road, and from its smallness and the manner in which it is built noises pass from one part of the house to the other, so that if we had any visitors a sick person could not be in quietness. We have made a lodging-room of the parlour below stairs which has a stone floor, therefore we have covered it all over with matting. The bed, though only a camp bed, is large enough for two people to sleep in. We sit in a room above stairs and we have one lodging-room with two single beds, a sort of lumber room and a small low unceiled room which I have papered with newspapers, and in which we have put a small bed without curtains. Our servant is an old woman 60 years of age whom we took partly out of charity and partly for convenience. She was very ignorant, very foolish, and very difficult to teach, so that I once almost despaired of her, but the goodness of her dispositions and the great convenience we knew we should find if my perseverance was at last successful induced me to go on. She has now learnt to do every thing for us mechanically, except those parts of cooking in which the hands are much employed, for instance she prepares and boils the vege[tab]les and [can] watch the meat when it is made ready for roasting, looks to the oven etc. My Brother John has been with us 8 months during which time we have had a good deal of company, for instance Mary Hutchinson for 5 weeks, Coleridge a month, and Mr. and Mrs. C. and their little boy nearly a month. During all this time we have never hired any helpers either for washing or ironing,

and she has washed all the linen of all our visitors except the family of the Coleridges during that month. I help to iron at the great washes about once in 5 weeks, and she washes towels, stockings, waistcoats, petticoats, etc. once a week, such as do not require much ironing. This she does so quietly, in a place apart from the house, and we know so little about it as makes it very comfortable. She sleeps at home, which is a great convenience in our small house, and in winter it is a considerable saving of fire that her home is so near, for after the dishes are washed up we let the kitchen fire go out, and we never light it till it is time to dress the dinner, and she employs herself at home. She is much attached to us, and honest and good as ever was a human being.

My Brother Christopher is now in Norfolk. It is true that he is desperately in love and engaged to marry Miss Lloyd, the sister of the author Charles Lloyd, and daughter of one of the Lloyds of Birmingham, but it is not likely that the marriage will take place for two or three years, as he must wait for a living. I have never seen this Miss Lloyd (Priscilla she is called) but from what I have heard of her I believe her to be an interesting and amiable young woman. Her Brother is coming to live at Ambleside; he has a wife and child, his wife is very highly spoken of by everybody but we are by no means glad that they are to be our neighbours (this between ourselves) because Charles Lloyd is a man who is perpetually forming new friendships, quarrelling with his old ones, and upon the whole a dangerous acquaintance.¹ Priscilla is to come with them, and after paying a visit to Mrs. Clarkson at Ulswater she is to spend the winter with her Brother and Sister at Ambleside. Christopher is so deeply engaged in college business that he could not contrive to come and see us this summer, but I hope he will spend some time with us next year. My friends at Fornsett are going on as usual. They have a fine family of children. I have not seen my Uncle

¹ Charles Lloyd (1775-1839) had 'domesticated' with Coleridge in 1796-7, and had not only quarrelled with him, but been the direct cause of Lamb's temporary estrangement from C. In 1800 he settled at Old Brathay, about a mile from Ambleside, and lived there till his total mental collapse in 1815. D's fears that he would not prove a congenial neighbour were fully justified.

but I am told he looks much more like a Doctor of Divinity than he used to do. He was at Penrith at the death of my Uncle Crackanthorp. When John leaves us he intends spending some time at Fornecett. But he will stay with us as long as he can, which will be no longer than till the arrival of the Abergavenny, which is expected this month or next. You may have heard that my Uncle Crackanthorp left me 100£—it was a small sum compared with all that we have lost, but I daresay he would have done much more if he had been a free agent in the making of his will. He did not so much as name the name of his brother or one of his nephews! Poor man! I shed many a tear for him during his sickness and when I heard of his death. My Aunt Crackanthorp is despised by everybody about Penrith from her excessive pride. William the eldest child is the darling of all who know him, he is lively, sensible, excessively affectionate, and it is not in the power of his mother or his aunt to give him the least atom of pride.

My Brother William is going to publish a second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* with a second volume. He intends to give them the title of 'Poems by W. Wordsworth', as Mrs. Robinson¹ has claimed the title, and is about publishing a volume of *Lyrical Tales*. This is a great objection to the former title, particularly as they are both printed at the same press and Longman is the publisher of both the works. The first volume sold much better than we expected, and was liked by a much greater number of people, not that we had ever much doubt of its finally making its way, but we knew that poems so different from what have in general become popular immediately after their publication were not likely to be admired all at once. The first volume I have no doubt has prepared a number of purchasers for the second, and independent of that, I think the second is much more likely to please the generality of readers. William's health is by no means strong, he has written a great deal since we first went to Allfoxden, namely during the year preceding our going into Germany, while we were there, and since our

¹ Mary Robinson (1758–1800), actress, royal mistress, and authoress, known in her day as 'Perdita'. She published volumes of facile but affected and jejune verse in 1775, 1777, and 1791. *Lyrical Tales* appeared in 1800, but, after all, W. did not change his title.

arrival in England, and he writes with so much feeling and agitation that it brings on a sense of pain and internal weakness about his left side and stomach, which now often makes it impossible fo[r] him to [write] when he is in mind and feelings in such a state that he could do it without difficulty.

We have spent a week at Mr. Coleridge's since his arrival at Keswick. His house is most delightfully situated, and combines all possible advantages both for his wife and himself, *she* likes to be near a town, *he* in the country—it is only $\frac{1}{2}$ a qr of a mile from Keswick and commands a view of the whole vale. Mrs. Coleridge is going to lie in, her little boy, Hartley, who is an original sprite, is to come and stay with us during that time, he is a sweet companion, always alive and of a delightful temper, I shall find it very difficult to part with him when we have once got him here.

William and John were in Yorkshire last summer, at Gordale Yordas, etc, thence they went to see our friends the Hutchinsons, and were absent a whole month. They talked about paying you a visit, but they found they had stayed so long at Scarborough that they did not like to leave me alone any longer. During their absence, I felt myself very lonely while I was within doors, I wanted my little companion Basil, and poor old Molly did but ill supply to me the place of our good and dear Peggy who was quite as a friend to us. Basil is with an Uncle in Huntingdonshire—we wish his father to send him to some school, if possible in the North of England that he may be near us.

We are very comfortably situated with respect to neighbours of the lower classes, they are excellent people, friendly in performing all offices of kindness and humanity, and attentive to us without servility—if we were sick they would wait upon us night and day. We are also upon very intimate terms with one family in the middle rank of life, a clergyman with a very small income, his wife, son and daughter. The old man is upwards of eighty yet he goes a fishing to the Tarns on the hill-tops with my Brothers, and he is as active as many men of 50. His wife is a delightful old woman, mild and gentle, yet chearful in her manners and much of the gentlewoman, so made by long exercise of the duties of a wife and a mother and the charities of a

SEPTEMBER 1800

neighbour, for she has lived 40 years in this vale, and seldom left her home. The daughter, though much inferior to her mother, is a pleasant kind of woman, and the son is an interesting man, he is about 40, manages his father's glebe land, reads a little, and spends much time in fishing. When we were at Keswick Mrs. Spedding had not left her room after her lying-in so we did not see her. Margaret Spedding was not at home, but we saw Miss Spedding when we called, she also called upon me but I was not at home, and we took a walk with her one morning. I hope the Coleridges will find them pleasant neighbours but we are too far from them to receive much benefit from their society. My Brother William has seen Mrs. Spedding several times, and I think he was a good deal pleased with her. Old Mrs. Gibson was there when I called. I was excessively struck with a certain forbidding stateliness in her manner, very unlike your good mother in law Mrs. Marshall, whose mild good sense and humble gentle manners I can never cease to remember with pleasure. The thought of what you have lost brings me once again to you. I think I have talked long enough about myself and my own concerns. You must indeed feel most sensibly the want of so pleasing a companion and so kind a friend as Mrs. Marshall, but you have great cause of comfort and thankfulness in having made her latter days easy. It might look a little like flattery when I praise your own husband to you if you were not my old friend Jane Pollard—he is indeed an interesting man, so gentle, so mild, and with so much genuine feeling, simplicity, and good sense. My Brothers quite take to him. I wish heartily that he could have stayed longer with us, he seemed to enjoy what he saw so deeply. I tried to persuade him to bring you along with him next summer but I could not make him promise. When you see anybody who is likely to write to Mr. Threlkeld (I understand that Mrs. T. and her daughters are not at home) pray desire them to tell him that we hope he will come by Grasmere in his road from Scotland, or perhaps Harriot may be writing to Elizabeth and she will take the trouble of mentioning it. [I] am extremely glad to hear that your mother enjoys so good a state of health. Pray make [my] kind remembrances to her and all your sisters, particularly my best love to Ellen and Harr[iot.]

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I found that one sheet of paper would not contain half of what [I had to say] to you. I am sorry to charge you with double postage, [but I think] you will pay it willingly after our long silence. Give y[our little] William a kiss for me. God bless you my dea[r] F[riend.] believe me with sincere affection, your friend,

D. Wordswor[th.]

I take up the pen again as I have not, I find[,] ans[wered] all your questions. With respect to passing our time I [can] [? not] tell you how we pass it because though our employ[ments are] not very various yet they are irregular. We walk [every] day and at all times of the day, we row upon the wate[r], and in the summer sit a great part of our time under the apple trees of the orchard or in a wood close by the lake-side. William writes verses, John goes a fishing, and we read the books we have and such as we can procure. I read German, partly as preparatory to translating, but I am unfit for the task alone, and William is better employed, so I do not know when it will turn to much [account.] If Wm's name rises amongst the booksellers we shall [have] no occasion for it. We often have our friends calling in upon us. Anthony Harrison of Penrith (E. Threlkeld knows him) came last Saturday but one and stayed till Sunday—on the Friday after Mr. and Mrs. James Losh of West Jesmond near Newcastle called, and we breakfasted with them the next morning at Ambleside, and on that same day Mr. and Mrs. Clarkson came to dinner, and stayed with us till after dinner on Monday. Mr. Clarkson is the man who took so much pains about the slave trade, he has a farm at Ulswater and has built a house.¹ Mrs. C. is a pleasant woman. We are going there next Wednesday and shall probably stay till the Sunday after. We intend walking over the mountains and Mr. and Mrs. Clarkson will meet us with a boat at Patterdale. When you see Mrs. Rawson give my kind love to her, tell her I have received her letter which crossed mine on the road, and that I will write to her shortly. Once more adieu my dear Jane. I have written till my fingers

¹ Eusemere Hill, on the E. bank of the Lake, less than a mile from Pooley Bridge. Catherine Clarkson, *née* Buck (1772–1856), was soon to become one of D.'s most intimate friends.

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ache, and I fear unless you have wondrous patience I have written far more than you can read. God bless you for ever.

D. W.

My Brothers and Mr. Marshall have a delightful day. I hope they are now with Coleridge at Keswick.

I have told you that I was surprized to see your husband grown so fat. I should have added that I thought he looked very well. He will tell you that I am much thinner than when I last saw you. I first lost my flesh in Dorsetshire having [caught] a violent cold attended with a swelled face, violent toothache and many symptoms of fever. I was never fat afterwards though less thin than I am at present, and I am afraid I shall never regain the stone and a quarter of flesh which I have lost. My pens and ink are the worst that ever were written with and William has run away with the pen-knife. Give my kind love to the Fergusons.

Friday afternoon. I went yesterday afternoon to drink tea with Mrs. Simpson, and at my return found William. He had parted from Mr. Marshall and John in Borrowdale, and crossed the mountains home. He regretted very much that he was obliged to leave them, but he was too ill to go on—he looked dreadfully when he reached home and his side and stomach were very bad but today he is better. John accompanied Mr. M. to Buttermere—we expect him at Grasmere tomorrow evening. Both my Brothers and Mr. M. had a delightful walk on Wednesday morning half round Thurlemere Water, they dined at the Royal Oak at Keswick, and drank tea and supped at Coleridge's. I suppose that John and Mr. M. will part at Keswick tomorrow—I am much grieved that Wm was not able [to] stay with them, both on his account and Mr. M.'s. I shall send off this letter today. You will have heard from your [hus]band by this time; he closed a letter to you [at Gra]smere. Wm's kind remem-[brances.] God love you! We expect Sarah Hutchinson in the spring. I hope she will stay 3 or 4 months.

Address: Mrs. Marshall, to the Care of Miss Ferguson, Halifax, Yorkshire.

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Hale White. 111. *W. W. to Mr. Biggs, Printer*
K.

Grasmere, 15th September [1800].

Dear Sir,

It is my particular request that, if no part of the poem of *Christabel* is already printed off, the poems which I now send should be inserted before *Christabel*. This I wish to be done even if the press for *Christabel* be composed. I had no notion that the printing of *Christabel* would be begun till you received further intelligence from Mr. Coleridge, or I should have sent these poems before. The Preface shall certainly be sent off in four days at furthest.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most obed^t Serv^t,

W. Wordsworth.

112. *W. W. to Messrs. Biggs and Cottle*

Hale White.
K.

[p.m., Keswick, Oct. 10, 1800.]

Sir,

I sent off a short letter by the last post containing a paragraph concerning *Christabel* which I wished to have inserted towards the conclusion of the Preface. I now write to say that this paragraph must not be inserted or taken any notice of, and further that I wish the first Page of the preface to be cancelled in order to be reprinted. If Mr Longman consents to alter the titlepage according as I stated the first sentence of the preface in the reprinted leaf must stand thus.

‘The first volume of these poems, under the title of Lyrical Ballads has already been presented etc.’

The paragraph, I believe it is the second, beginning ‘For the sake of variety and from a consciousness of my own weakness, etc.’ down to the words ‘do almost entirely coincide’ must be cancelled; and, when reprinted, must stand thus. ‘It is proper to inform the Reader that the Poems entitled The Ancient Mariner, The Foster-mother’s Tale, The Nightingale, The Dungeon, and Love are written by a friend, who has also furnished

OCTOBER 1800

me with a few of those Poems in the second volume, which are classed under the title of "Poems on the Naming of Places."

It is my wish and determination that (whatever the expense may be, which I hereby take upon myself) such Pages of the Poem of Christabel as have been printed, (if any such there be), be cancelled. I mean to have other poems substituted a sheet of which will be sent by the next Post, and you may *now* and henceforth *depend* on being supplied without any intermissions.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely

W. Wordsworth.

K. 113. *W. W. to Joseph Cottle*

December, 1800.

My dear Cottle,

. . . Mrs. Coleridge and her youngest child are now with us. . . . Coleridge is at Keswick. . . . I wish much that I could have presented you with a copy of the *Lyrical Ballads*, but I foolishly did not stipulate with Longman for any copies for myself, so that I must depend upon his liberality, and must present the few copies which I shall have to a few persons who would be offended if they did not receive this mark of attention from me. . . . —I am, my dear Cottle, yours affectionately,

W. Wordsworth.

114. *W. W. to Messrs. Biggs and Cottle*

Hale White.

K(—)

[p.m., Dec. 23, 1800.]

Dear Sirs,

Have you received a sheet containing three poems? namely, *The Pet-Lamb*, *Lines written in Germany*, and *The Childless Father*? Have you likewise received another containing *The Old Cumberland Beggar*, *Rural Architecture*, and part of a Poem entitled *A Poet's Epitaph*. Likewise have you received a third letter containing the Remainder of *A Poet's Epitaph*, *A Character*, and two poems 'On the Naming of Places'?

If you have not received these three letters pray be so good as to write immediately to let me know. This present sheet contains three other 'Poems on the Naming of Places,' which you will print as they are numbered. By the same post I send you two other sheets containing a poem entitled *Michael*. This poem contains 493 or 4 lines. If it be sufficient to fill the volume to 205 pages or upwards, printing it at 18 lines, or never more than 19, in a page—as was done in the first edition of the 'Lyrical Ballads'—you will print this poem immediately after the 'Poems on the Naming of Places,' and consider it as (with the two or three notes adjoined) finishing the work. If it does not fill up so much space as to make the volume 205 pages, you must not immediately print the Poem of *Michael*, as I wish it to conclude the volume. If what I have sent does not make the volume amount to 205 pages, let me know immediately *how many pages* it amounts to, and I will send you something to insert between *Michael* and the 'Poems on the Naming of Places.'

By beginning the Preface the space of three or four lines lower down in the page there will be no occasion to reprint half the sheet. Omitting the note at the bottom the sentence will stand thus

'For the sake of variety, and from a consciousness of my own weakness I was induced to request the assistance of a Friend, who furnished me with the Poems of *The Ancient Mariner*, *The Foster Mother's Tale*, *The Nightingale*, *The Dungeon*, and the poem entitled *Love*. I should not however have requested this assistance etc.' The rest of the paragraph to stand as printed. If, printing as I have said, the matter is not enough, or cannot be contrived, to fill up the page, pray let me know.

I do not exactly like the Title-page, though I do not know how to alter it to have a better effect. I must, however, particularly request that my name be printed in a smaller character. If you can think of any other alterations that will improve the look of the Title-page pray make them. There is a sad mistake in the Preface, namely, 'Lucretia' printed for 'Lucretius.' This ought in every copy to be corrected with a pen. If not, it must be mentioned in the errata. I mentioned to Mr. Longman my intention to prefix an Essay to the 2nd volume, but this I must decline.

DECEMBER 1800

N.B. It is my *particular desire* that no advertisements of books be printed at the end of the volume. I am sorry I have detained you so long in the printing of this work. I have been stopped by bad health.

I am, &c.,
W. Wordsworth.

K. 115. *W. W. to Mr. Biggs*

[Postmark, Keswick, Dec. 24, 1800.]

Mr. Biggs,
Sir,

I sent off the three last sheets of the L. B. in a great hurry yesterday; and I have to request that you will take your pen, and transcribe into the first sheet, which I sent yesterday, the three following verses, which I think I neglected to insert. They relate to the fourth 'Poem on the Naming of Places.' If you look towards the end of that poem you will find these words

was chang'd

To serious musing and to self-reproach.

Immediately after which ought to follow these three verses.

Nor did we fail to see within ourselves

What need there is to be reserved in speech,

And temper all our thoughts with charity.

These three lines are absolutely necessary to render the poem intelligible. In the poem of *Michael*, about the middle of the first part, you will find this line—

The Clipping Tree a name which still it bears.

Take a pen, and alter the word 'still' into the word 'yet'—Let the line be printed—

The Clipping Tree, a name which yet it bears.

A few lines from the end of the first part of the same poem you will find this line,

But when the lad, now ten years old, could stand

Alter the manuscript with a pen, and let it be printed thus

But soon as Luke now ten years old could stand.

DECEMBER 1800

From a printed sheet I received yesterday from Mr. Coleridge, I see that the sheet containing *The Pet Lamb &c.*, had been received, but I am afraid that the sheet containing *The Old Cumberland Beggar, &c.* must either have miscarried, or reached you much later than it ought to have done; else I cannot conceive why in your last letter you should have said that four sheets were wanting to complete the work. If this sheet should have miscarried, do not begin to print the poem of *Michael* till you have written to tell me what poems have been received and printed. The sheet which contained *The Cumberland Beggar* contained also a part of the *The Poet's Epitaph*, without which what followed in the next sheet would be nonsense. In the page of *errata*, let *Lucretius* be read for *Lucretia*, in the Preface. Second volume page 145 line first, Place a comma after the words 'disconsolate creature,' and omit the comma after 'perhaps.' Page 147 for 'both grey, red, and green' substitute 'grey, scarlet, and green.'

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MS. 116. W. W. to Charles James Fox
M. G. K.

Grasmere, Westmoreland January 14th 1801

Sir,

It is not without much difficulty, that I have summoned the courage to request your acceptance of these Volumes. Should I express my real feelings, I am sure that I should seem to make a parade of diffidence and humility.

Several of the poems contained in these Volumes are written upon subjects, which are the common property of all Poets, and which, at some period of your life, must have been interesting to a man of your sensibility, and perhaps may still continue to be so. It would be highly gratifying to me to suppose that even in a single instance the manner in which I have treated these general topics should afford you any pleasure; but such a hope does not influence me upon the present occasion; in truth I do not feel it. Besides, I am convinced that there must be many things in this collection, which may impress you with an unfavorable idea of my intellectual powers. I do not say this with

a wish to degrade myself; but I am sensible that this must be the case, from the different circles in which we have moved, and the different objects with which we have been conversant.

Being utterly unknown to you as I am, I am well aware, that if I am justified in writing to you at all, it is necessary, my letter should be short; but I have feelings within me which I hope will so far shew themselves in this Letter as to excuse the trespass which I am afraid I shall make. In common with the whole of the English People I have observed in your public character a constant predominance of sensibility of heart. Necessitated as you have been from your public situation to have much to do with men in bodies, and in classes, and accordingly to contemplate them in that relation, it has been your praise that you have not thereby been prevented from looking upon them as individuals, and that you have habitually left your heart open to be influenced by them in that capacity. This habit cannot but have made you dear to Poets; and I am sure that, if since your first entrance into public life there has been a single true poet living in England, he must have loved you.

But were I assured that I myself had a just claim to the title of a Poet, all the dignity being attached to the Word which belongs to it, I do not think that I should have ventured for that reason to offer these volumes to you: at present it is solely on account of two poems in the second volume, the one entitled '*The Brothers*,' and the other '*Michael*,' that I have been emboldened to take this liberty.

It appears to me that the most calamitous effect, which has followed the measures which have lately been pursued in this country, is a rapid decay of the domestic affections among the lower orders of society. This effect the present Rulers of this Country are not conscious of, or they disregard it. For many years past, the tendency of society amongst almost all the nations of Europe has been to produce it. But recently by the spreading of manufactures through every part of the country, by the heavy taxes upon postage, by workhouses, Houses of Industry, and the invention of Soup-shops &c. &c. superadded to the encreasing disproportion between the price of labour and that of the necessaries of life, the bonds of domestic feeling among the

poor, as far as the influence of these things has extended, have been weakened, and in innumerable instances entirely destroyed. The evil would be the less to be regretted, if these institutions were regarded only as palliatives to a disease; but the vanity and pride of their promoters are so subtly interwoven with them, that they are deemed great discoveries and blessings to humanity. In the mean time parents are separated from their children, and children from their parents; the wife no longer prepares with her own hands a meal for her husband, the produce of his labour; there is little doing in his house in which his affections can be interested, and but little left in it which he can love. I have two neighbours, a man and his wife, both upwards of eighty years of age; they live alone; the husband has been confined to his bed many months and has never had, nor till within these few weeks has ever needed, any body to attend to him but his wife. She has recently been seized with a lameness which has often prevented her from being able to carry him his food to his bed; the neighbours fetch water for her from the well, and do other kind offices for them both, but her infirmities encrease. She told my Servant two days ago that she was afraid they must both be boarded out among some other Poor of the parish (they have long been supported by the parish) but she said, it was hard, having kept house together so long, to come to this, and she was sure that 'it would burst her heart.' I mention this fact to shew how deeply the spirit of independence is, even yet, rooted in some parts of the country. These people could not express themselves in this way without an almost sublime conviction of the blessings of independent domestic life. If it is true, as I believe, that this spirit is rapidly disappearing, no greater curse can befall a land.

I earnestly entreat your pardon for having detained you so long. In the two poems, '*The Brothers*' and '*Michael*' I have attempted to draw a picture of the domestic affections as I know they exist amongst a class of men who are now almost confined to the North of England. They are small independent *proprietors* of land here called statesmen, men of respectable education who daily labour on their own little properties. The domestic affections will always be strong amongst men who live in a country

not crowded with population, if these men are placed above poverty. But if they are proprietors of small estates, which have descended to them from their ancestors, the power which these affections will acquire amongst such men is inconceivable by those who have only had an opportunity of observing hired labourers, farmers, and the manufacturing Poor. Their little tract of land serves as a kind of permanent rallying point for their domestic feelings, as a tablet upon which they are written which makes them objects of memory in a thousand instances when they would otherwise be forgotten. It is a fountain fitted to the nature of social man from which supplies of affection, as pure as his heart was intended for, are daily drawn. This class of men is rapidly disappearing. You, Sir, have a consciousness, upon which every good man will congratulate you, that the whole of your public conduct has in one way or other been directed to the preservation of this class of men, and those who hold similar situations. You have felt that the most sacred of all property is the property of the Poor. The two Poems which I have mentioned were written with a view to shew that men who do not wear fine cloaths can feel deeply. ‘Pectus enim est quod disertos facit, et vis mentis. Ideoque imperitis quoque, si modo sint aliquo affectu concitati, verba non desunt.’¹ The poems are faithful copies from nature; and I hope, whatever effect they may have upon you, you will at least be able to perceive that they may excite profitable sympathies in many kind and good hearts, and may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature, by shewing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us. I thought, at a time when these feelings are sapped in so many ways that the two poems might co-operate, however feebly, with the illustrious efforts which you have made to stem this and other evils with which the country is labouring, and it is on this account alone that I have taken the liberty of thus addressing you.

Wishing earnestly that the time may come when the country

¹ See Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* x. vii. 15.

JANUARY 1801

may perceive what it has lost by neglecting your advice, and hoping that your latter days may be attended with health and comfort.

I remain, With the highest respect and admiration,
Your most obedient and humble Serv^t
W Wordsworth

Address : The Right Hon^{ble} Charles James Fox.

MS. *117. W. W. to Francis Wrangham*
K.

[Jan. or Feb., 1801.]

My dear Wrangham,

The letter which you were so kind as to write to me some months ago arrived in due time. Notwithstanding my procrastinating spirit, I do honestly believe that I should have answered it immediately, had it not been, that at that time I was in bad health and particularly engaged in preparing my 2nd Vol: for the press, being also at that time three months behind hand in fulfilling my engagement with Longman. Soon afterwards I learned that Coleridge had received a Letter from you to which, as in duty bound, he replied immediately. Now, I, being a wretched lazy fellow, as soon as I had heard this, said, as I imagine, to myself, my duty to Wrangham is more than half discharged, therefore, quoad Wrangham, for three months to come I will live the life of a Lazzarone, doing nothing; to which I cannot add thinking nothing, for I may honestly say that not a day has passed without thinking about him, and his kindness in remembering me, as he has done.

Your Letter indeed, my dear Friend, gave me very great pleasure. I need not say how much I was disappointed in not seeing you at your parsonage house. Though I was much pressed for time I purposed to stop at least a couple of days with you. I called in company with a Mr. Hutchinson who lives at Gallowhill near Wykeham. He is one of Mr. Langley's Farmers, and a particular friend of mine. At the time when we called at Hunmanby, my Brother John and I were staying in Mr. Hutchinson's house, a visit which we prolonged for *three weeks*.¹ Mr.

¹ You will find a note upon these three weeks in postscript. (W. W. in margin.)

JANUARY OR FEBRUARY 1801

Hutchinson's house is kept by his sister, a woman who is a very particular friend both of my Sister and myself. If ever you go that way it would be a great kindness done to me if you would call on them, and also at any future period render them any service in your power: I mean as to lending Miss Hutchinson books, or when you become acquainted with them, performing them any little service, auprès de Monsieur *ou Madame* Langley, with respect to their farm. Miss Hutchinson I can recommend to you as a most amiable and good creature, with whom you would converse with great pleasure.

We live quite out of the way of new books; I have not seen a single one since I came here, now 13 months ago. You will not therefore be surprized if your sermons,¹ neither 'the Rome is fallen', nor the Vol: have found their way to us. Had they done so, they must literally have come 'Heav'n-directed to the poor.' Neither have we seen your poem. I congratulate you on your return to the Muses. When you visit this country mind you bring your poems along with you, also your sermons, if possible. I read with great pleasure a very elegant and tender poem of yours in the 2nd Vol: of the Anthology. It is a pity but that you could have avoided in the last Stanzas of that poem a vulgar use of the word 'charms': in other respects the poem is very pleasing and as I recollect altogether unobjectionable. As to your invitation into Yorkshire, I am afraid the day is distant. Coleridge, as a married man not over and above rich, is tethered, I also have my tether with which I have no inclination to quarrel. Besides, I am not strong enough to walk, and too poor to ride. Nevertheless I shall bear your invitation in mind, and keep the complying with it among the number of my pleasant wishes. We look forward to the thought of seeing you with great delight, you shall have a hearty welcome though very homely fare, no wine and even little beer, in our tiny cottage. Poor Coleridge has been very unwell in a rheumatic fever, confined to his room and often to his bed. He is however now, I hope, quite recovered. Let me hear from you soon. Your very affectionate Friend

W. Wordsworth.

¹ 13 *Practical Sermons*, founded on Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of*

JANUARY OR FEBRUARY 1801

P.S.—Upon looking over my Letter I find that it is probable you will think I portioned out my time very unjustly when I gave 3 weeks to my Friends the Hutchinsons, and only allotted 2 days to you. The fact was, during the former part of my stay with the H—s, I knew that you were from home, it was during the last 4 or 5 days that I called on you, doubting even then, whether you would be returned.

My 2nd Vol: of L. B. has been out a month; we have not yet seen it ourselves.

MS. 118. W. W. to Messrs. Longman and Rees¹

Grasmere 27th March—1801

Dear Sir,

I am sorry to have troubled you with another letter which I sent off by the last post, a fortnight having elapsed without my hearing from you; but yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving your letter and several copies of the cancelled sheets. I have also the pleasure to inform you that the six copies of the Lyrical Ballads arrived on the same day, by means of Crosby and Letterman.

I consider the 30£ which you advanced to Mr Coleridge as advanced on my account; and of course I consider the 80£ due to me for the right of printing those two Editions as paid; I must, however, remind you that Mr Coleridge and I conjointly are in your debt for two Copies of Withering's Botany and two botanical microscopes. I am Sir

your most obed^t Serv^t—

W^m. Wordsworth

Address: Messrs. Longman and Rees, Paternoster Row, London.

Religion in the Soul. To which are annexed Rome is fallen! a sermon [on Rev. xiv. 8] preached 1798, with notes and illustrations, &c., 1800.

¹ This letter is written at the end of a longer letter by Coleridge in which C. broaches a plan for printing '*Christabel, a Legend, in five Books*', 'with little drawings engraved or cut in wood, . . . representing the particular scenes and Places, which are mentioned in the course of the Tale'.

Between this letter and Letter 119 should follow a short undated letter to W. Calvert, unavailable for this edition. It was written to accompany an affectionate gift of the *L. B.*, which W. sends though he is fully aware of his friend's indifference to poetry. In a P.S. it is stated that Christopher W. is now lodging in Ambleside, courting Priscilla Lloyd (v. p. 302).

APRIL 1801

MS.
T.P.

119. *W. W. to Thomas Poole*

Grasmere, near Ambleside Westmoreland
April 9th [1801]

My dear Poole

I am afraid that you will not think the subject of this Letter of sufficient consequence to justify my putting you to the expense of postage in these hard times. Should you feel disposed to blame me I have an excuse to make, beyond what I feel does exist in anything which gives me an opportunity of assuring you how highly I esteem your character, and what affectionate recollections I carry about with me of you and your good mother.

In the last Poem of my 2nd Vol. I have attempted to give a picture of a man, of strong mind and lively sensibility, agitated by two of the most powerful affections of the human heart; the parental affection, and the love of property, *landed* property, including the feelings of inheritance, home, and personal and family independence. This Poem has, I know, drawn tears from the eyes of more than one—persons well acquainted with the manners of the Statesmen, as they are called, of this country; and, moreover, persons who never wept, in reading verse, before. This is a favourable augury for me. But nevertheless I am anxious to know the effect of this Poem upon you, on many accounts; because you are yourself the inheritor of an estate which has long been in possession of your family; and, above all, because you are so well acquainted, nay, so familiarly conversant with the language, manners, and feeling of the middle order of people who dwell in the country. Though from the comparative infrequency of small landed properties in your neighbourhood, your situation has not been altogether so favourable as mine, yet your daily and hourly intercourse with these people must have far more than counterbalanced any disadvantage of this kind; so that all things considered, perhaps there is not in England a more competent judge than you must be, of the skill and knowledge with which my pictures are drawn. I had a still further wish that this poem should please you, because in writing it I had your character often before my eyes, and sometimes

APRIL 1801

thought I was delineating such a man as you yourself would have been under the same circumstances.

Do not suspect me of a wish to bribe you into an admiration of the poem in question, by this time no doubt you must have read it, and it must have had a fair trial upon you.

I am now come to the circumstance which was the *determining* cause of my writing to you. The 2nd Vol: is throughout miserably printed, and after line, page 210,

‘Receiving from his father hire of praise,’

by a shameful negligence of the printer there is an omission of fifteen lines absolutely necessary to the connection of the poem. If in the copy sent to you this omission has not been supplied you may be furnished with half a sheet which has been reprinted, if you have any acquaintance who will call at Longman’s for it and send it down to you. In the meanwhile my Sister will transcribe for you the omitted passage. I should be vexed if your copy is an imperfect one, as it must have then been impossible for you to give the poem a fair trial. Remember me affectionately to your Mother, and also to Ward, and believe me, dear Poole, yours sincerely,

W. Wordsworth

Tell me whether you think the insertion of these lines an improvement.

We shall be highly delighted to see you in this country. I hope you will be able to stay some time with us. Coleridge was over at Grasmere a few days ago; he was both in better health and in better spirits than I have seen him for some time. He is a great man, and if God grant him life will do great things.

My sister desires to be affectionately remembered to you and your Mother, not forgetting Ward.

W. W.

Christabel is to be printed at the *Bulmerian* Press, with Vignettes, etc. etc. I long to have the book in my hand; it will be such a Beauty. Farewell.

(*In D.’s hand.*)

See page 210

Receiving from his Father hire of praise

. . . his daily hope (*Michael*, ll. 191–206)

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Page 211. Begin the second Part of the Poem thus.—with a large letter

While in the fashion which I have describ'd
This simple household thus were living on
From day to day, to Michael's ear etc. etc.

My Brother has written the following lines to be inserted Page 206 after the 9th line—Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.

Though in these occupations they would pass
Whole hours with but small interchange of speech,
Yet were there times in which they did not want
Discourse both wise and prudent, shrewd remarks
Of daily providence, clothed in images
Lovely and beautiful, in rural forms
That made their conversation fresh and fair
As is a landscape:—And the shepherd oft
Would draw out of his heart the obscurities
And admirations that were there, of God
And of His works, or yielding to the bent
Of his peculiar humour, would let loose
The tongue and give it the wind's freedom—then
Discoursing on remote imaginations, story,
Conceits, devices, day-dreams, thoughts and schemes,
The fancies of a solitary man.

Address: Mr. Thomas Poole, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater,
Somerset.

MS. 120. *W. W. to Miss Taylor*¹

Grasmere

April 9th 1801.

Madam,

I have great reason to congratulate myself on the pleasure which my poems have afforded you; and I ought to have thanked you sooner for your kindness in communicating it. But I have

¹ Mr. L. P. McIntyre has identified Miss Taylor as the sister of John T. (1757–1832), at one time editor of the *Sun* (v. letter, W. W. to J. T. Nov. 21,

been prevented by indisposition, a violent cold, which threw me back in some indispensable business; which circumstance, I hope, will plead my excuse.

You do me too much honor when you express a desire to learn from me an account of such events in my life as may have had an influence in forming my present opinions. With this request I should have complied with great pleasure, had the task been more difficult, but the history of my life is very short. I was born at Cockermouth, about twenty-five miles from the place where I now dwell. Before I was nine years of age I was sent to the Grammar School of Hawkshead, a small market-village near the Lake of Esthwaite: there I continued till the beginning of my eighteenth year, at which time I went to Cambridge, where I remained three years and a half. I did not, as I in some respects greatly regret, devote myself to the studies of the University. This neglect of University studies will be easily comprehended by you, when I inform you, that I employed the last of my summer vacations in a pedestrian tour in the Alps. Since I left Cambridge, my time has been spent in travelling upon the Continent and in England; and in occasional residences in London, and in different parts of England and Wales. At present I am permanently fixed in my native country. I have taken a house in the vale of *Grasmere* (a very beautiful spot of which almost everybody has heard,) and I live with my Sister, meaning if my health will permit me, to devote my life to literature. It may be proper to add that my Father was by profession an Attorney, and that he and my Mother both died when I was a Boy.

In what I have said I am afraid there will be little which will throw any light on my writings, or gratify the wish which you entertain, to know how I came to adopt the opinions which I have expressed in my preface; and to write in the style in which my poems are written: but in truth my life has been unusually

1826). In *Records of my Life* (2 vols. 1832) J. T. tells that, many years before, W. had written him a letter, 'accompanied with two vols. of his *L. B.*: the letter imparted the desire to know what impression his poems, written by an author living in rural retirement, had made upon a man living in the bustle of active life'. (ii. 287-8). J. T. also states that his father had a house in Hatton Garden, and speaks of 'the affection of my sister, together with her merits both moral and intellectual'.

barren of events, and my opinions have grown slowly, and I may say insensibly.

You ask me if I have always thought so independently. To this question I am able to give you a satisfactory answer by referring you to two poems, which I published in the beginning of the year 1798. The one is entitled 'Descriptive Sketches made during a Pedestrian Tour in the Italian, Grison, Swiss and Savoyard Alps', the other 'an Evening Walk, an Epistle addressed to a Young Lady', both published, with my name, by Johnson St Paul's Churchyard. They are juvenile productions, inflated and obscure, but they contain many new images, and vigorous lines; and they would perhaps interest you, by shewing how very widely different my former opinions must have been from those which I hold at present. It would have given me great pleasure to have sent you copies of these poems, if I had been possessed of them. Johnson has told some of my Friends who have called for them, that they were out of print: this must have been a mistake. Unless he has sent them to the Trunk-maker's they must be lying in some corner of his warehouse, for I have reason to believe that they never sold much.

You flatter me, Madam, that my style is distinguished by a genuine simplicity. Whatever merit I may have in this way I have attained solely by endeavouring to look, as I have said in my preface, steadily at my subject. If you read over carefully the Poem of the Female Vagrant, which was the first written of the Collection (indeed it was written several years before the others) you will see that I have not formerly been conscious of the importance of this rule. The diction of that Poem is often vicious, and the descriptions are often false, giving proofs of a mind inattentive to the true nature of the subject on which it was employed. Hoping that it may afford you some amusement I will write down a few corrections of this poem in which I have endeavoured to bring the language nearer to truth. I think, if you will take the trouble of comparing these corrections with the correspondent passages in the printed poem, you will perceive in what manner I have attempted gradually to purify my diction.

Omit the first stanza entirely and begin the poem with the 2nd, omit the 3rd and 4th Stanzas. Page 70. the Line 'His little

range of water was denied' must have another substituted for it which I have not written. Page 72 For, 'with proud parade' Read, 'day after day', the next line For 'to sweep the streets' Read 'and clear'd the streets'.

Page 73 read the first stanza thus

There long were we neglected; and we bore
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weigh'd.
Green fields before us, and our native shore,
We breath'd a pestilential air that made
Ravage for which no knell was heard—We pray'd
For our departure; wish'd and wish'd, nor knew
'Mid that long sickness, and those hopes delay'd,
That happier &c. . . . Omit the first stanza of page 74.

Page 75 after 4th line read thus

I too was calm—though heavily distress'd!
O me! how quiet sky and ocean were!
My heart was heal'd within me, I was bless'd
And look'd, and look'd &c. &c.—

Page 76 Read first Stanza thus

At midnight once a storming army came:
Yet do I see the miserable sight,
The bayonet, the Soldier, and the flame
That follow'd us, and fac'd us, in our flight:
When Rape and Murder by the ghastly light
Seiz'd their joint prey, the Mother and the child!
But I must leave these thoughts—From night to night
From day to day the air breath'd soft and mild
And on the gliding vessel heaven and ocean smil'd.

Page 77 Read the first stanza thus

And oft I thought, (my fancy was so strong)
That I, at last, a resting-place had found:
Here will I dwell said I, my whole life long
Roaming the illimitable waters round;
Here will I live: of every friend disown'd,
Here will I roam about the ocean-flood—
To break my dream &c &c— — —

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In the next stanza of the same page for '*How dismal toll'd*'
Read '*Dismally toll'd*'

I am afraid you may have found the perusal of these fragments tedious and uninteresting. I have no other apology to make, but that I wished in a way however imperfect, to comply with the request with which you honored me.

I remain, Madam,

Your obliged and faithful Servant

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Miss Taylor, No. 10 Hatton Garden, London.

MS. 121. D. W. and W. W. to Mary Hutchinson

[Grasmere] Wednesday, April 27th [1801.]

My dearest Mary,

We left poor Coleridge on Monday evening; we had been with him a week and a day. You know that I wrote to Sara on the Friday evening before we went to Keswick giving her the joyful tidings that C. was better—but alas! on Saturday we had a sad account of him. I was determined not to give you unnecessary uneasiness, therefore I did not write. We left home at one o'clock on Sunday, and reached Keswick, at about six. We both trembled, and till we entered the door we hardly durst speak. He was sitting in the parlour, and looked dreadfully pale and weak. He was very, very unwell in the way that Sara can describe to you: ill all over, back, and stomach, and limbs, and so weak that he changed colour whenever he exerted himself at all. Our company did him good, and the next day he was much better. Since that time he has been upon the whole greatly improved in his looks and strength, but he was never quite well for more than an hour together during the whole time we were there, though he began to form plans and schemes for working, but he was unable to do anything. The weather was very fine when we were there, such as one would have thought might have set him up at once, but these frequent attacks make him more weak in recovering from them. I do think he will never be quite well till he has tried a warm climate. If he were to live for six months at Lisbon, in

the South of France, or at one of the Western Isles, he would probably be restored to perfect health and might keep himself well with tolerable care. He and Hartley are to come over in the first returned Chaise after tomorrow—Hartley is to stay some time with us and to go to Grasmere school. Dear little fellow! he will be as happy as a young lamb playing upon the green turf in the Church-yard with our bonny little lasses. We hope that C. will grow well in a short time after he comes to us—but there is no security for his continuing so. We should have stayed longer at Keswick but our company not being so new did not do him so much good as at first, and then we are never comfortable there after the first two or three days. This of course we do not mind while we are of any essential service to him, but the same cause which makes us uncomfortable at Keswick prevents him from having all the good from us that he otherwise would have. Mrs C. is in excellent health. She is indeed a bad nurse for C., but she has several great merits. She is much, very much to be pitied, for when one party is ill-matched the other necessarily must be so too. She would have made a very good wife to many another man, but for Coleridge!! Her radical fault is want of sensibility, and what can such a woman be to Coleridge? She is an excellent nurse to her sucking children (I mean to the best of her skill, for she employs her time often foolishly enough about them). Derwent is a sweet lovely Fatty—she suckles him entirely—he has no other food. She is to be sure a sad fiddle faddler. From about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10 on Sunday morning till two she did nothing but wash and dress her 2 children and herself, and was just ready for dinner. No doubt she suckled Derwent pretty often during that time.

When I say I would not give you any unnecessary uneasiness about Coleridge, do not fear that I shall not inform you at all times when he is *very* ill, but as his relapse was only a common one I did not like to give you pain. I will write to you immediately after he arrives, and I hope and trust I shall be able to tell you he is better.

We found a letter from John on our arrival at home at 12 o'clock on Monday night. We had *such* a walk! so delightful! We left Keswick at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 5 in order that we might avoid the

heat of the day, and we rested again and again by the road-side. We had the full round moon before us just above Helvellyn. The night was very clear, and it was so light that I read John's letter without a candle at William's room window, and his hand is not a very legible one. We roused Molly and Sally Ashburner out of bed, and gladly they rose, as it was to receive us. We found the garden much improved in our absence. Our cabbages look well and we have two crops of peas up—the flowers are in thriving condition. I have sowed plenty of scarlet beans—I would give a good deal that they might be as nice as last year and that you might see them. The garden looks well indeed, but the Vale is miserable. It is scorched and burnt as brown as an autumn stubble-field. We had left the Vale of Keswick fresh, green and beautiful and we expected to find this Valeso, but Oh! the heavy disappointment. The days are intensely hot, and the nights are frosty—Everybody prays for rain, which God send down soon! it would be a woful season, if we should have another time of scarcity.

You will be glad to hear that our good friend, Mr Griffith, has sent us a barrel of the best flour from America—it is now at Liverpool.

My dearest dear Mary I look forward with joy to seeing you again—you *must* come in Autumn or before—how I wish Joanna could be spared—you might then come on here from Middleham—it is but a half-way journey, but all the way from Gallowhill is terrible! How glad I shall be to hear that you are with Sara—she is a dear good creature. I wish from my heart that William and I could be with you—pray tell us everything about Middleham, and do not fear, dear Mary, that you ever write too often, or can write too often. William is better than he was a while ago, he is taking a stomachic medicine, which I hope will do him good, but his digestion is still very bad—he is always very ill when he tries to alter an old poem, but new composition does not hurt him so much. I hope he will soon be able to work without hurting himself. I am quite well and indeed I am inclined to write you a long letter, but I am so thrown back with being at Keswick, where I can do nothing, that I have not time. I am going to write to Mr Griffith, Miss Griffith and Mrs Rawson, and I have finished a long sheet to John filled as full as possible with poems

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and letter. The thrushes are singing divinely in the orchard. It is 7 o'clock. William is lying upon the outside of the bed that has its back to the window. I have the little round green table beside him. We are going to tea and then for a walk. Wm will take the pen while I prepare the tea. When we return from walking I shall write to Sara. My kindest love to Tom. God bless you! I wish that you were here, that you were both here to walk with us, you and dearest Sara.

(*W. writes*)

We are very happy to have such good news of your health; mind you take care of yourself and contrive to grow fat; not as Dorothy does, fat one day and lean another, but fat and jolly for half a year together. D. and I sat two hours in John's firgrove this morning, 'twas a burning hot day but there we had a delicious cool breeze—How we wished for our dear dear friends, you and Sara! You will recollect that there is a gate¹ just across the road, directly opposite the firgrove; this gate was always a favourite station of ours; we love it far more now on Sara's account. You know that it commands a beautiful prospect; Sara carved her cypher upon one of its bars, and we call it her gate. We will find out another place for your cypher, but you must come and fix upon the place yourself. How we long to see you, my dear Mary.

We had a melancholy visit at Coleridge's—Adieu—love to Tom—I now transcribe a short poem to be read after 'She dwelt among'²

I travell'd among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England, did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

¹ Generally known as the Wishing Gate.

² This poem is usually dated 1799, but its inclusion here proves it to have been written shortly before this letter. This explains its absence from the 1800 vols.

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Among thy mountains did I feel
The gladness of desire;
And she I cherish'd turn'd her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed,
The bowers where Lucy play'd;
And thine is too the last green field
Which Lucy's eyes survey'd.

God for ever bless thee, my dear Mary—Adieu.

Address: Miss Hutchinson, Gallow Hill, Wykeham, Malton;
Yorkshire.

MS. 121a. D. W. to Sara Hutchinson
M(—)

[Grasmere, 1801.]

My dearest Sara,

On Saturday Evening we walked up to the carrier's in a severe storm of wind and rain to enquire for letters and newspapers. On Sunday namely yesterday morning we went again, and were heavily disappointed at not hearing of you. We then concluded that you must have been coming yesterday but we were well assured that if you had known what would have been our disappointment you would have written to tell us. William craves newspapers. God love you. We hope you are all well. Yours ever D. W.

Love to C Mrs. C Derwent and Hartley.

Monday morning

For¹ Coleridge's entertainment I send the following harmonies of criticism—

Nutting

Mr C. Wordsworth
worth its weight in gold.

Nutting

Mr Stoddart²
can make neither head nor tail
of it.

¹ This P.S. is in W.'s handwriting.

² Stoddart, Sir John (1773–1856), a prominent journalist, and from 1805 to 1807 King's Advocate at Malta; from 1812 to 1816 he wrote leaders for *The Times*. In 1808 Hazlitt married S.'s sister.

Joanna

Mr John Wordsworth
the finest poem of its length you
have written.

Poet's Epitaph

Mr. Charles Lamb
the latter part eminently good
and your own.

Cumberland Beggar

Mr. John Wordsworth
Indeed every body seems de-
lighted with Cumberland beggar.

Idiot Boy

Mr John Wordsworth
To a Lady, a friend of mine I gave
the 2 vol: they were both new
to her. The Idiot Boy of all the
poems her delight; could talk of
nothing else.

But here comes the Waggon!

Address: Miss Hutchinson or Mr Coleridge, Greta Hall, Keswick.

Joanna

Mr. Stoddart
takes the description of the echoes
as a thing regularly and per-
manently believed, of course can
make nothing of the poem.

Poet's Epitaph

Mr Stoddart
The latter part I dont like, it is
very ill written.

Cumberland Beggar

Mr Charles Lamb
The instructions too direct. You
seem to presume your readers
are stupid, etc. etc.

Idiot Boy

Mr Stoddart
Thrown into a *fit* almost with
disgust, cannot *possibly* read it.

MS. 122. W. W. and D. W. to S. T. Coleridge
K.

[Grasmere, May 1801]
Friday Eve, or rather Night.

(*W. writes*)

My dear Coleridge,

Night it is, and Dorothy and I have been very foolish in
putting off writing to you till this time; in fact we have been
drinking tea at Mr. Lough's,¹ and the expectation of a letter from

¹ i.e. Captain Luff. He and his wife were friends of the Clarksons and
had a house at Patterdale (v. Letter 232); at this time they were staying in
Ambleside. In 1814 they went to Mauritius where L. died. Mrs. L. returned

the Hutchinsons induced us to accompany the Lloyds (who were at Lough's also) as far as Rydale. Now, as a Letter is not so heavy or so bulky an *article* as to require the portorage of *two* persons, it would have been quite sufficient if *one* of us had gone, and, in the meantime, the other might have been employed in writing to you. But so it was—*hinc illae lacrymae*, as Partridge¹ learnedly citeth from one of the antients. It is now past ten, and we are both tired, so that it is an absolute *contest* of politeness, with a little brotherly kindness interspersed, which of us is to walk up to Fletcher's² with this Letter and the accompanying parcel. We cannot *both* go, as we have suffered Molly to retire to cover and little Hartley cannot be left. These several displays of presence of mind in this antithetical way are highly entertaining—Dorothy is packing up a few small loaves of our American flour; as to the supper-cake which I promised, it died of a very common malady, bad advice. The oven must be hot, perfectly hot, said Molly the experienced, so into a piping red-hot oven it went, and came out (but I hate antithesis, in colours especially) black as a genuine child of the coal hole. In plain English, it is not a sendable article.

(*D. writes*)

I take the pen, having put up the bread and a few baked trouts, the first trouts we have had this season. poor John, dear John! we think of him whenever we see the shape of a trout. He has at last a prospect of sailing—I learn from my Aunt Cookson that a 74 gun ship is ordered to convoy them all the way. She had this intelligence from himself—God bless you! dear Coleridge. We are sadly grieved for your poor eyes and the rest of your complaints, but we sorrow not without hope. Oh, for one letter of perfect uncomplainingness! We did not write on to England and after a time settled in the Lake country. She succeeded the de Quincey's in their tenancy of Fox Ghyll, and is often mentioned in the later correspondence of the W.'s.

¹ Partridge, i.e. Tom Jones's barber companion, who had been 'brought to ruin by too much learning'; '*hinc illae lacrymae*, sir, that's my misfortune'. (*The History of T. J.*, Bk. viii. c. 2.)

² Fletcher, the Keswick carrier, who kept his horses and carts at Town End. He lived at Townhead, and as he started early in the morning letters written the night before were sometimes pushed under the door of his coach-house.

MAY 1801

Tuesday, because we had much to do and little to say.—I wish I had more time now. I could talk to you a long time about Hartley. Dear little fellow, he is well and happy. He has slept very quietly at nights ever since you were here only he is long in falling asleep. He talks a great deal about Mrs Wilson.¹ Tell her that I am sure he can never forget her—If he had not been in bed and asleep, he would gladly have written her a letter. We hope Mrs. C and Derwent continue well. Give our kind love to Mrs. C and kisses to the Bairn. The Boat is painted with great taste, and the paint sent is twice too much, but we shall keep it for the house. Poor William! his stomach is in bad plight. We have put aside all the manuscript poems, and it is agreed between us that I am not to give them up to him even if he asks for them. The enclosed letter from the sisters will not give you much pleasure, as it is chiefly about their sister Betsy.

Good night, dear Coleridge. We are very sorry we have not time to write you a better letter.

D. and W. Wordsworth.

[*No address, probably put inside the parcel and sent by the carrier.*]

MS.

123. W. W. to Thomas Poole

T.P. K(—)

[Grasmere, Kendal, Westmorland, July 1801]

My dear Poole,

Your long and kind Letter I received some time ago; it gave me the highest pleasure to learn that in the Poems about which alone I was anxious, I had pleased you; and your praise was expressed with such discrimination as gave it a high value indeed. On some future occasion I will write to you at length on the subject of your Letter. In the meantime, accept my *best thanks* for it.

At present I have taken up the pen solely on Coleridge's account, and must confine my Letter to him and his affairs. I know how much you will be concerned to hear that his health cannot be said to be much better, indeed any better at all. He is apparently quite well one day, and the next the fit comes on

¹ Mrs. Wilson, familiarly known as Wilsy, acted as nurse to the little Coleridges.

him again with as much violence as ever. These repeated shocks cannot but greatly weaken his constitution; and he is himself afraid that, as the disease (which is now manifestly the gout) keeps much about his stomach, he may be carried off by it with little or no warning. I would hope to God that there is no danger of this; but it is too manifest that the disease is a *dangerous* one; it is the gout in a habit not strong enough to throw it out to the extremities. At all events, as I have said, his body must be grievously weakened by the repeated attacks under which he is at present labouring. We all here feel deeply persuaded that nothing can do him any effectual good but a change of climate; and it is on this subject that I have now written to you.—The place which he thinks of going to is the Azores; both for the climate, and the Baths which are known to be exceedingly salutary in cases of gout and Rheumatism; and on account of the cheapness of living there, and the little expense in getting thither. But you know well how poor Coleridge is situated with respect to money affairs; indeed it will be impossible for him to accomplish the journey without some assistance. He has been confined to his *bed*, one may say, the half of the last ten months; this has rendered it impossible for him to earn anything, and his sickness has also been expensive. It was the more unfortunate that this sickness should have come upon him, just after an expensive journey, and other expenses necessary, previously to his settling in this country. In short, I see it will be utterly out of his power to take this voyage, and pass some time there, without he can procure a sum amounting at the *lowest* to £50. Further, it seems to me absolutely necessary that this sum should be procured in a manner the least burthensome to his feelings possible. If the thought of it should hang upon his mind when he is away, it will undo or rather prevent all the salutary effects of the climate. I have thought it my duty to mention these circumstances to you as being a person more interested perhaps than any other in what befalls our common Friend. Wade of Bristol is, I know, a most excellent and liberal Man, and one who highly values Coleridge, and one whom Coleridge values also greatly, but he has a family, and I have therefore thought it right not to speak to him on the subject before I had consulted with you. As

JULY 1801

Coleridge at present does not [intend] to take his wife or children with him, I should hope that £50 might be enough ; if she goes, I am sure he will want £100 or near it.

Now it is my opinion, and I daresay will be yours, that the money should be lent to him, in whatever way you think will *ultimately* hang the least upon his mind. He has mentioned to me a scheme of this sort, viz. that he would write to Godwyn desiring him to call upon some bookseller to request him to advance 100£ upon some work to be written by Coleridge within a certain time, for the repayment of which 100£ Coleridge would request you or some other of his Friends to be security, if the work were not forthcoming at the time appointed. This plan, for my own part, though I did not like to say so abruptly to Coleridge, I greatly disapprove, as I am sure it would entangle him in an engagement which it is ten to one he would be unable to fulfil, and what is far worse, the engagement, while useless in itself, would prevent him from doing anything else.

My dear Poole, you will do what you think proper on this statement of facts ; if, in case of Coleridge's death, you could afford to lose 50£, or more if necessary, it may perhaps appear proper to you to lend him that sum, unshackled by any conditions, but that he should repay it when he shall be able ; if he dies, if he should be unwilling that any debt of his should devolve on his Brothers, then let the debt be cancelled. That is what I should propose to him myself, if I could do it with any propriety.

I therefore need not apologize to you for what I have said. If a larger sum than 50£ would be wanted, Wade or some other of his friends would be willing to divide the risque or loss among them. I have said this because it would perhaps be fair in itself, and would give them pleasure.

Pray be so good as to excuse this Letter. I only half know what I have been writing ; a friend came in just as I began, and my sister and he have been talking all the time, to my great confusion.

(*Unsigned.*)

Address: Mr Thomas Poole, Nether Stowey, near Bridgewater,
Somerset.

NOVEMBER 1801

MS.

124. W. W. to Richard W.

[Nov. 24, 1801]¹

My dear Brother,

I wrote to you some time ago about a box which I have never yet received. I suppose it is not sent off. Montagu tells me that he has a new suit of Clothes to send me, I have written to him to day to send the parcel to your Chambers; as soon as you receive it do be so good as send it off with all the other things, my books etc etc. I earnestly beg this of you, put in also any clothes of your own which you may have done with, likewise a few quires of large copy writing paper, you will know what I mean, tis a coarse folio paper of the largest size, you Lawyers use much of it. This box would come much cheaper to me, if sent down to Beale's wharf to come by one of the Stockton Traders directed to Mr *John* Hutchinson Stockton, for Mr Wordsworth.

Will you be so good as to let me know what sum of money we have received from you since the beginning of December two years back. We want to know exactly what we have spent during this time; we have an account of our own, but we are apprehensive of some mistake.

John told us he had made arrangements for Dorothy receiving 20£ yearly which was to be had from the India house in half yearly payments. She wishes that you would call for this money and send her down what must be due.

We are both pretty well in health though neither quite so well as we have been, Dorothy being subject to bilious sicknesses from time to time; and I having trouble [] with some little touch of a sort [] I hope you continue well. What [] writing to John? have you had an account about the ship? Now do not fail my dear Richard on any account to write to me, and send off the box etc etc. I am your very affectionate B^r

W. Wordsworth

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Att^y at Law, Staple Inn, London.

¹ n.d., but endorsed by R. W. Nov. 24, 1801.

MS. 125. *W. W. to Daniel Stuart*¹
S.

Grasmere, Kendal, Westmorland,
 Monday, December 21st [1801.]

Dear Sir,

I know you will excuse the Liberty I am going to take. I wrote to Coleridge to request he would send me 10£. I find, by a Letter which I received from him this day, that he must have left town before my Letter could reach him. Now I happen at this moment to have particular occasion for this sum, I have therefore taken the Liberty of requesting you would send it down to me here, and consider him your Debtor to that amount, or, as you like it best, look to me for the immediate repayment of the sum, or if you have no objection, for articles for your paper in value to that amount. I have written to C. to inform him of this application to you, which I have made because I could not receive the money from himself in time for my purpose. Thanking you for the entertainment your excellent Paper affords me, I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Stuart, No. 335 Strand, London.

MS. 126. *D. W. to Richard W.*

Grasmere February 22nd 1802

My dear Brother,

We received the Box which you sent containing some Books of William's with some of your and Montagu's cast off Clothes. William thanks you for the trouble you have had about them. William has some idea of going up to London himself which prevented me from writing to you before to tell you of the safe arrival of the Box—he has now given up all thought of visiting London at this time. We are both pretty well—William has been

¹ Daniel Stuart (1766–1846), journalist; brother-in-law to Sir T. Mackintosh whom he assisted as Sec. to the Society of Friends of the People (1796). In 1795 he purchased the *Morning Post* and in 1796 *The Courier*, of which he quickly increased the sale to 7,000. Mackintosh introduced Coleridge to him in 1797, and Coleridge was a fitful writer to his papers for many years. W. sent some of his political sonnets to the *Morning Post* in 1802 and also wrote part of his *Convention of Cintra* pamphlet for *The Courier*. In 1803 Stuart sold the *Morning Post* for £25,000—in 1822 he sold *The Courier* and retired to Wykeham Park, Oxon. In politics he was a moderate Tory. He was much respected for his high character.

FEBRUARY 1802

somewhat ill but he is now better. He has begun a new regimen which we hope will be of great use to his stomach. Have you sent off that letter which I directed to Staple Inn about two months ago to be forwarded to John? Pray tell me if there is any prospect that you can send another letter to reach him before his return? I want to write to him again. Have you heard anything more about him? We had accidentally an opportunity of hearing through Mr Fleming that he was well at the Cape of Good Hope. One of the Raincocks¹ had seen him there and had received great civilities from him.

When do you talk of coming down into the North? We wish we could see you at Grasmere. I have been expecting to receive the 10£ which you were to receive for me from the India house. Perhaps you have not yet demanded it. I hope there is no doubt but that it will be paid at once.

We have been staying a month, just after Christmas, at Mr Clarkson's at the foot of Ulswater—and one of the Miss Hutchinsons has spent seven weeks of this winter with us, so we have not been much in solitude. It has been a very unpleasant winter, very changeable and unwholesome weather—I have, however, upon the whole borne it very well, though I have sometimes not been quite so well as I could have wished. I hope that you are quite well.

I received a letter from Kitt on my return from Eusemere enclosing his yearly present to me—he was well and wrote in good spirits. No doubt you will have heard of the offer which Lord Westmoreland made him and which he refused. He is become quite a University Preacher—I am afraid we shall not see him in Westmoreland this year.

We were at the Brow just before we came home—Mr Myers² is as young as any one of us.

I hope you will let us hear from you as soon as you have received the 10£. William's kind love to you

I remain my dear Brother

You very affecte Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

¹ The Flemings and Raincocks (of Rayrigg) were schoolfellows of W.

² The husband of their aunt, Anne Myers.

APRIL 1802

MS.

127. D. W. to Richard W.

Eusemere Hill near Penrith

6th April [1802]

My dear Brother,

I have written to you twice respecting the money which, as my Brother John told me, he had made arrangements that I should receive during his absence. I am very sorry to trouble you with another letter upon the business, but as I have not received any answer from you I conclude that the money is not forthcoming, owing, perhaps, to John's not having taken proper precautions about it before he left England. Now as from the positive manner in which John assured me that the money would be payed on demand, I had calculated without any doubt whatever upon receiving it, and had expended more than I should otherwise have done, I should be put to the great inconvenience without it, and having at present a Bill to pay which I destined to be paid with John's allowance I therefore must beg you to take it upon yourself for the present, and to be so good as to send me the money out of your own purse. When John returns to England I have not a doubt that he will repay the different sums that you may advance to me. I know very well how largely you have expended yourself in lending money to John for his voyage, and that you cannot on that account have a great deal to spare, but I am sure my dear Brother that you cannot think that I am making an unreasonable request. Pray be so good as to *write* to me immediately, and tell me how the case stands, and if you cannot *immediately* send me ten pounds, let me know when you are likely to be able to send it to me. You will direct to me at Grasmere as I shall be at home next Tuesday. I am now staying at Mr Clarkson's. William is gone for a few days into the County of Durham. We are both well. I have not seen Mr Myers yet nor been at Sockbridge.¹

You will receive a parcel from Longman and Rees containing 4 copies of the new Edition of the Lyrical Ballads. Pray be so

¹ Sockbridge, a small estate in the parish of Barton between Penrith and Ullswater, bought by Richard W. (W.'s grandfather) on coming into Westmorland. It descended, through his son John, to Richard W., the poet's brother.

APRIL 1802

good as to send one copy to my Brother Christopher at Cambridge and keep the others in your Bookcase till you hear more about them. One of them is for Mr Griffith, one to be sent to Miss Threlkeld of Halifax and another is for John. Did you forward my letter to John? do not fail to tell me all you know about him. I wish I could hear that you were likely to come down into the North next summer. I think we could make you enjoy yourself with fishing, and one thing or another.—God bless you!

believe me, my dear Brother

Your very affecte Sister

D. Wordsworth

I need not, I am sure, repeat my request that you would write to me without delay.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS.
K.

128. *W. W. to S. T. Coleridge*
(*with note by D. W.*)

[April 16, 1802]

My dear Coleridge,

I parted with Mary on Monday afternoon about six o'clock, a little on this side of Rushyford. Poor Creature! she would have an ugly storm of sleet and snow to encounter, and I am anxious to hear how she reached home. Soon after I missed my road in the midst of the storm, some people at a house where I called directed me how to regain the road through the fields, and alas! as you may guess I fared worse and worse. With the loss of half an hour's time, and with no little anxiety I regained the road. Unfortunately, not far from St. Helen's Auckland, the Horse came down with me on his knees, but not so as to fall overhead himself or to throw me. Poor beast it was no fault of his! A Chaise-driver of whom I inquired the next day told me it was a wonder he could travel at all, he wanted shoeing so sadly, and his hoofs cleaning and paring. I was so ignorant as not to know that a horse might stand in need of new shoes, though the old ones might not be loose. Except for this accident he carried me very well, better 20 times over than could be expected from a

Horse in that condition. The Horse is certainly well worth what Calvert asks for him, and not in my estimation to be at all worse thought of for this accident. I would wish you to buy him on this account if you can conveniently, and I will make up any loss if he should not happen to suit you. He seems shy as if he had not been well broken, but I did not discover any vice in him.—Between the beginning of Lord Darlington's park at Raby and two or three miles beyond Staindrop, I wrote the Poem which you will find on the opposite page. I reached Barnard Castle about half past ten, but I mistook the Inn; I was however well treated, but I wished to have been at the old one where we were together. Between eight and nine next evening I reached Eusemere, more tired than I should otherwise have been, on account of not being able to ride fast for the horse's shoes. Yesterday after dinner we set off on foot, meaning to sleep at Patterdale; a storm came on when we were within two miles of the Inn, and we were sadly wet; we had a good supper and good beds, but they and the breakfast cost us seven shillings; too much! This morning was delightful; we set off about half past ten and walked slow with many rests; I wrote the little description you will find overleaf during one of them; at Ambleside we called on the Luffs, to see how Luff was, but learning that the Boddingtons were upstairs, we did not see either Luff or his Wife. He has been dangerously ill but is now recovering fast. We reached home at dusk: so ends my story. Now for a word about yourself. I am very sorry indeed you have been poorly. Let us see you as soon as ever you find an inclination to come over. I was much pleased with your verses in D.'s letter; there is an admirable simplicity in the language of the first fragment, and I wish there had been more of the 2nd; the fourth line wants mending sadly, in other respects the lines are good. The extract from Pliny is very judicious, I remember having the same opinion of Pliny's Letters which you have express'd when I read them many years ago. Farewell, my dear, dear friend.

Among all lovely things my Love had been,
 Had noted well the stars, all flowers that grew
 About her home, but She had never seen
 A Glow-worm, never once, and this I knew.

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While I was riding on a stormy night,
Not far from her abode, I chanced to spy
A single Glow-worm once; and at the sight
Down from my Horse I leapt—great joy had I.

I laid the Glow-worm gently on a leaf,
And bore it with me through the stormy night
In my left hand—without dismay or grief
Shining, albeit with a fainter light.

When to the Dwelling of my Love I came,
I went into the Orchard quietly,
And left the Glow-worm, blessing it by name,
Laid safely by itself, beneath a tree.

The whole next day I hop'd, and hop'd with fear;
At night the Glow-worm shone beneath the tree;
I led my Emma to the place,—‘Look here!’—
O joy it was for her, and joy for me!

The incident of this Poem took place about seven years ago
between Dorothy and me.

Written while resting on the Bridge near the foot of Brother's
Water, between one and two o'clock at Noon April 16th 1802

The Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;

The Horse and his Marrow
Drag the plough and the harrow,
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:

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There's joy in the mountains ;
There's life in the fountains ;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing ;
The rain is over and gone!

We cannot put the Book under the door, God bless you!
D. W.¹

I have sent [? Shell] Book, tell me something about it. [P.S.
by W. W.]

MS. 129. D. W. to Mary Hutchinson

Friday evening—. $\frac{1}{4}$ past 11 by the watch, but you know it is a
little wrong headed—It is only $\frac{1}{4}$ past 10. April 16th [1802]

My dearest Mary,

We are sitting by our own fireside and we have been here since
the first beginnings of twilight. We are both well—that is com-
fort for you before I begin to tell you about our journey—and
indeed I can say nothing on that subject till I have spoken about
yourself. My dear, dear Mary! I am deeply concerned to hear
that you are so thin—Till I had seen William I had no idea how
thin you were—I cannot doubt but that you *will endeavour* to
take care of yourself, yet I am very fearful that your ardour of
mind may lead you to do imprudent things. For God's sake do
not measure your exertions by your own self supposed ability,
but put restrictions upon yourself, and do not overpass them on
any account. Take no more exercise than would be proper for
the regaining of your strength supposing that you were nearly
as *weak* as you are *thin*—above all, my dearest Mary, seek quiet
or rather amusing thoughts—Study the flowers, the birds and
all the common things that are about you. O Mary, my dear
Sister! be quiet and happy. Take care of yourself—keep yourself
employed without fatigue, and do not make loving us your
business, but let your love of us make up the spirit of all the
business you have. We are very anxious to know how you got

¹ Both the Poems are in D.'s handwriting.

home after you had parted with William, since he told me that you had owned that you felt weak, and have been very uneasy about you. We shall surely have a letter on Monday.

Now for Grasmere, Eusemere and William and myself. I was walking out alone when he arrived—I had gone by the lake side towards Martindale—Jane met me and told me he was come—I believe I screamed, when she said so, and ran on—I then recollected myself, and told her to run on before and tell him that I was coming, in order that he might meet me; but she was stupid, and so I met him in the parlour—he looked delightfully, but it was a sort of flushing in his face, for he was fatigued with his long ride—he got tea and very soon went to bed.

We left Eusemere yesterday afternoon at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 2. Mrs Clarkson, being very well, set off with us intending to go to Watermillock, but she got no further than into the lane at the foot of Dunmallet, for she durst not face the furious wind that blew against us—Indeed we could hardly stand it. If we had been going *from* home we certainly should have turned back, but we pushed on boldly. It sometimes almost took our breath away, we rested wherever we found a shelter, and reached Sty barrow Crag about sunset. A heavy rain came on, and when we passed Luff's house we were very wet; we turned in however to see the lower rooms, and as there was no hope that the storm would abate we pushed forward. I had Joanna's beautiful shawl on over my Spenser—Alas the *Gloss* is gone from it! but indeed I do not see that it is the worse. When we reached the Inn we were very wet. The Landlady looked sour enough upon us—I believe because she could not help it, for she was very civil; but there was a young woman, I suppose a visitor, very smart in a Bonnet with an artificial flower, who was kindness itself. She did more for me than Mrs Coleridge would do for her own Sister under the like circumstances. She made a smart Lady of me at once, and I came down to William, who was sitting by a bright fire that had sprung up as if by magic in my absence—he had got dry clothes and was comfortable. We wished for you. We had a good supper: ham, veal cutlets, preserved plums, ale, rum and water, dry beds and decent breakfast. We paid 7/-, one shilling too much. The morning was delightful—you have been

at that Inn, Mary! What a beautiful prospect there is from the chamber windows! I was exceedingly impressed by it when I opened my curtains in the morning, and saw the mountains, lake and fields all chearful and quiet, and the sun shining upon them so bright that one would almost wonder how it could be after such a night.

We set forward at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 10. William had shaved himself—he looked bonny and well. You ought to have been with us, we saw so many sweet things. Every foot of the road was new to me, and all that we saw was interesting, yet for ever changing. We sauntered and rested, loved all that we saw, each other, and thee, our dear Mary—sauntered and rested, lounged and were lazy. I left William sitting upon the Bridge near the foot of Brothers water and walked up the Lake—When I returned I found him writing the poem which I send you. We dined at the foot of Kirkstone upon some pies which Ellen made us. We came to Ambleside before sunset; the vale looked green and very beautiful. Poor Luff is in the Gout. We called, but we did not see them for the Boddingtons were there. We sauntered on towards home, and while we were sitting on the wall just beyond Rydale Jane Ashburner overtook us with an empty cart. We got in and rode nicely—She looked fresh and pretty, and amused us with an account of Mr Olliff's sale—most things sold beyond their worth, so we have nothing to regret in not having been here. The day was going away when we saw Grasmere—It looked, as it always does at that time of night, peaceful and homelike. We found all [well?] except Aggy Ashburner who has lamed herself, and is at home. Jane was driving John Green's cart—She is there instead of her sister. Molly is well; she looked clean and handsome, and the house is a perfect model of neatness; there is nothing like it anywhere. I went into the garden and I think things here have come on nicely, but there was not much daylight to see by, and the moon had not reached it. William is now writing to Coleridge—We found a letter from him—he says he has been ailing for two or 3 days. This is sad news—poor fellow! I fear he has his own torments. He says if we wish to see him he will walk over next week, so perhaps he will be here before the week is over. Dear Mary, we are glad

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to be at home—No fireside is like this. Be chearful in the thought of coming to it. I long for a letter. Best love to Miss Weir—also to Joanna, and a thousand thanks for the shawl.

Farewell—my dear Mary—write often—I wish you were at G[allow] Hill—I heard from Sara last Saturday—Farewell again dear Mary.

(Poems as in W.'s letter to Coleridge. Of 'The Cock is crowing', the first stanza is transcribed by Dorothy, the second by William, who has added the words:)

Heaven bless you, dearest Mary!

W. W.

I put my letters in the Off: at Appleby—

Address: Miss S. Weir, Stockton upon Tees. For Miss Hutchinson.

M. G. K. 130. W. W. to John Wilson¹

[June, 1802.]²

My dear Sir,

Had it not been for a very amiable modesty you would not have imagined that your letter could give me any offence. It was on many accounts highly grateful to me. I was pleased to find that I had given so much pleasure to an ingenuous and able mind, and I further considered the enjoyment which you had had from my Poems as an earnest that others might be delighted with them in the same, or a like manner. It is plain from your letter that the pleasure which I have given you has not been blind or unthinking; you have studied the poems, and prove that you have entered into the spirit of them. They have not given you a cheap or vulgar pleasure; therefore I feel that you are entitled to my kindest thanks for having done some violence to your natural diffidence in the communication which you have made to me.

¹ John Wilson (1785–1854), educated at Glasgow and Oxford; in 1810 he settled for a time at Elleray, Windermere, and became very intimate with the W.'s (v. Letters of that date).

² This undated letter was sent to John Wilson early in June 1802. On the 24th of May Wilson had written from Glasgow University one of the earliest appreciative letters in reference to the *Lyrical Ballads*; and this was Wordsworth's reply to it, some parts being suggested by Dorothy, as it was a joint production. K.

There is scarcely any part of your letter that does not deserve particular notice ; but partly from some constitutional infirmities, and partly from certain habits of mind, I do not write any letters unless upon business, not even to my dearest friends. Except during absence from my own family I have not written five letters of friendship during the last five years. I have mentioned this in order that I may retain your good opinion, should my letter be less minute than you are entitled to expect. You seem to be desirous of my opinion on the influence of natural objects in forming the character of Nations. This cannot be understood without first considering their influence upon men in general, first, with reference to such subjects as are common to all countries ; and, next, such as belong exclusively to any particular country, or in a greater degree to it than to another. Now it is manifest that no human being can be so besotted and debased by oppression, penury, or any other evil which unhumanizes man as to be utterly insensible to the colours, forms, or smell of flowers, the [? voices]¹ and motions of birds and beasts, the appearances of the sky and heavenly bodies, the general² warmth of a fine day, the terror and uncomfortableness of a storm, etc. etc. How dead soever many full-grown men may outwardly seem to these things, all are more or less affected by them ; and in childhood, in the first practice and exercise of their senses, they must have been not the nourishers merely, but often the fathers of their passions. There cannot be a doubt that in tracts of country where images of danger, melancholy, and grandeur, or loveliness, softness, and ease prevail, they will make themselves felt powerfully in forming the characters of the people, so as to produce a uniformity of national character, where the nation is small and is not made up of men who, inhabiting different soils, climates, etc., by their civil usages and relations, materially interfere with each other. It was so formerly, no doubt, in the Highlands of Scotland ; but we cannot perhaps observe it in our own island at the present day, because, even in the most sequestered places, by manufactures, traffic,

¹ The words in brackets were supplied conjecturally by Christopher W. (*Memoirs*, i. 192-200) where the MS. was torn.

² General: so M. G. K., but genial is probably what W. wrote.

religion, law, interchange of inhabitants, etc., distinctions are done away which would otherwise have been strong and obvious. This complex state of society does not, however, prevent the characters of individuals from frequently receiving a strong bias, not merely from the impressions of general nature, but also from local objects and images. But it seems that to produce these effects, in the degree in which we frequently find them to be produced, there must be a peculiar sensibility of original organization combining with moral accidents, as is exhibited in *The Brothers* and in *Ruth*; I mean, to produce this in a marked degree; not that I believe that any man was ever brought up in the country without loving it, especially in his better moments, or in a district of particular grandeur or beauty, without feeling some stronger attachment to it on that account than he would otherwise have felt. I include, you will observe, in these considerations, the influence of climate, changes in the atmosphere and elements, and the labours and occupations which particular districts require.

You begin what you say upon *The Idiot Boy* with this observation, that nothing is a fit subject for poetry which does not please. But here follows a question, Does not please whom? Some have little knowledge of natural imagery of any kind, and, of course, little relish for it; some are disgusted with the very mention of the words 'pastoral poetry,' 'sheep,' or 'shepherds'; some cannot tolerate a poem with a ghost or any supernatural agency in it; others would shrink from an animated description of the pleasures of love, as from a thing carnal and libidinous; some cannot bear to see delicate and refined feelings ascribed to men in low conditions of society, because their vanity and self-love tell them that these belong only to themselves and men like themselves in dress, station, and way of life; others are disgusted with the naked language of some of the most interesting passions of men, because either it is indelicate, or gross, or vulgar; as many *finé* ladies could not bear certain expressions in *The Mother*¹ and *The Thorn*, and as in the instance of Adam Smith, who, we are told, could not endure the ballad of *Clym of the*

¹ *The Mad Mother* (Oxf. W., p. 145). In 1815 the title was changed to *Her Eyes are Wild*.

Clough, because the author had not written like a gentleman. Then there are professional and national prejudices forevermore. Some take no interest in the description of a particular passion or quality, as love of solitariness, we will say, genial activity of fancy, love of nature, religion, and so forth, because they have [little or] nothing of it in themselves; and so on without end. I return then to [the] question, please whom? or what? I answer, human nature, as it has been [and ever] will be. But where are we to find the best measure of this? I answer, [from with]in; by stripping our own hearts naked, and by looking out of ourselves to[wards men] who lead the simplest lives, and those most according to nature; men who have never known false refinements, wayward and artificial desires, false criticisms, effeminate habits of thinking and feeling, or who, having known these things, have outgrown them. This latter class is the most to be depended upon, but it is very small in number. People in our rank in life are perpetually falling into one sad mistake, namely, that of supposing that human nature and the persons they associate with are one and the same thing. Whom do we generally associate with? Gentlemen, persons of fortune, professional men, ladies, persons who can afford to buy, or can easily procure, books of half-a-guinea price, hot-pressed, and printed upon superfine paper. These persons are, it is true, a part of human nature, but we err lamentably if we suppose them to be fair representatives of the vast mass of human existence. And yet few ever consider books but with reference to their power of pleasing these persons and men of a higher rank; few descend lower, among cottages and fields, and among children. A man must have done this habitually before his judgment upon *The Idiot Boy* would be in any way decisive with me. I *know* I have done this myself habitually; I wrote the poem with exceeding delight and pleasure, and whenever I read it I read it with pleasure. You have given me praise for having reflected faithfully in my Poems the feelings of human nature. I would fain hope that I have done so. But a great Poet ought to do more than this: he ought, to a certain degree, to rectify men's feelings, to give them new compositions of feeling, to render their feelings more sane, pure, and permanent, in short, more consonant to

nature, that is, to eternal nature, and the great moving spirit of things. He ought to travel before men occasionally as well as at their sides. I may illustrate this by a reference to natural objects. What false notions have prevailed from generation to generation as to the true character of the Nightingale. As far as my Friend's Poem in the *Lyrical Ballads* is read, it will contribute greatly to rectify these. You will recollect a passage in Cowper, where, speaking of rural sounds, he says,

And *even* the boding owl
That hails the rising moon has charms for me.

Cowper was passionately fond of natural objects, yet you see he mentions it as a marvellous thing that he could connect pleasure with the cry of the owl. In the same poem he speaks in the same manner of that beautiful plant, the gorse; making in some degree an amiable boast of his loving it, *unsightly* and unsmooth as it is. There are many aversions of this kind, which, though they have some foundation in nature, have yet so slight a one that, though they may have prevailed hundreds of years, a philosopher will look upon them as accidents. So with respect to many moral feelings, either of love or dislike. What excessive admiration was paid in former times to personal prowess and military success; it is so with the latter even at the present day, but surely not nearly so much as heretofore. So with regard to birth, and innumerable other modes of sentiment, civil and religious. But you will be inclined to ask by this time how all this applies to *The Idiot Boy*. To this I can only say that the loathing and disgust which many people have at the sight of an idiot, is a feeling which, though having some foundation in human nature, is not necessarily attached to it in any virtuous degree, but is owing in a great measure to a false delicacy, and, if I may say it without rudeness, a certain want of comprehensiveness of thinking and feeling. Persons in the lower classes of society have little or nothing of this: if an idiot is born in a poor man's house, it must be taken care of, and cannot be boarded out, as it would be by gentlefolks, or sent to a public or private asylum for such unfortunate beings. [Poor people,] seeing frequently among their neighbours such objects, easily [forget] whatever there is of

natural disgust about them, and have [therefore] a sane state, so that without pain or suffering they [perform] their duties towards them. I could with pleasure pursue this subject, but I must now strictly adopt the plan which I proposed to myself when I began to write this letter, namely, that of setting down a few hints or memorandums, which you will think of for my sake.

I have often applied to idiots, in my own mind, that sublime expression of Scripture, that *their life is hidden with God*. They are worshipped, probably from a feeling of this sort, in several parts of the East. Among the Alps, where they are numerous, they are considered, I believe, as a blessing to the family to which they belong. I have, indeed, often looked upon the conduct of fathers and mothers of the lower classes of society towards idiots as the great triumph of the human heart. It is there that we see the strength, disinterestedness, and grandeur of love; nor have I ever been able to contemplate an object that calls out so many excellent and virtuous sentiments without finding it hallowed thereby, and having something in me which bears down before it, like a deluge, every feeble sensation of disgust and aversion.

There are, in my opinion, several important mistakes in the latter part of your letter which I could have wished to notice; but I find myself much fatigued. These refer both to the Boy and the Mother. I must content myself simply with observing that it is probable that the principle cause of your dislike to this particular poem lies in the *word* Idiot. If there had been any such word in our language *to which we had attached passion*, as lack-wit, half-wit, witless, etc., I should have certainly employed it in preference; but there is no such word. Observe (this is entirely in reference to this particular poem), my 'Idiot' is not one of those who cannot articulate, or of those that are usually disgusting in their persons:

Whether in cunning or in joy,
And then his words were not a few, etc.

and the last speech at the end of the poem. The boy whom I had in my mind was by no means disgusting in his appearance, quite

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the contrary ; and I have known several with imperfect faculties who are handsome in their persons and features. There is one, at present, within a mile of my own house, remarkably so, though [he has something] of a stare and vacancy in his countenance. A friend of mine knowing that some persons had a dislike to the poem, such as you have expressed, advised me to add a stanza, describing the person of the boy [so as] entirely to separate him in the imaginations of my readers from that class of idiots who are disgusting in their persons ; but the narration in the poem is so rapid and impassioned, that I could not find a place in which to insert the stanza without checking the progress of the poem and [so leaving] a deadness upon the feeling. This poem has, I know, frequently produced the same effect as it did upon you and your friends ; but there are many also to whom it affords exquisite delight, and who, indeed, prefer it to any other of my poems. This proves that the feelings there delineated are such as men *may* sympathise with. This is enough for my purpose. It is not enough for me as a Poet, to delineate merely such feelings as all men *do* sympathise with ; but it is also highly desirable to add to these others, such as all men *may* sympathise with, and such as there is reason to believe they would be better and more moral beings if they did sympathise with.

I conclude with regret, because I have not said one half of [what I intended] to say ; but I am sure you will deem my excuse sufficient, [when I] inform you that my head aches violently, and I am in other respects unwell. I must, however, again give you my warmest thanks for your kind letter. I shall be happy to hear from you again, and do not think it unreasonable that I should request a letter from you when I feel that the answer which I may make to it will not perhaps be above three or four lines. This I mention to you with frankness, and you will not take it ill after what I have before said of my remissness in writing letters. I am, dear sir, with great respect,

Yours sincerely,
W. Wordsworth.

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MS. 131. D. W. and W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 10th June 1802

(D. writes)

My dear Brother,

William received your letter on Monday morning. I am considerably better than I was when I wrote to you last, though far from well. I have had the most severe cold I have ever had in all my life, and it has taken hold both of my strength and my looks.

I will make no comments upon the intelligence which William communicated to you in his last, except, that I do not doubt that, if his health is so good that he can go on with those employments in which he has lately been engaged, his marriage will add to his comfort and happiness. Mary Hutchinson is a most excellent woman—I have known her long, and I know her thoroughly; she has been a dear friend of mine, is deeply attached to William, and is disposed to feel kindly to all his family.

As you express a desire to know what are my wishes or expectations respecting a settlement¹ upon me, I will explain to you frankly how I feel, though, relying as I do, and have ever had reason to rely, upon the affection of my Brothers and their regard for my happiness, I do not doubt that, according to their power, they would meet the full extent of my wishes, without my making them known myself. I shall continue to live with my Brother William,—but he having nothing to spare, nor being likely to have, at least for many years, I am obliged (I need not say how much he regrets this necessity) to set him aside, and I will consider myself as boarding through my whole life with an indifferent person. Sixty pounds a year is the sum which would entirely gratify all my desires. With sixty pounds a year I should not fear any accidents or changes which might befall me—I cannot look forward to the time when, with my habits of frugality, I could not live comfortably on that sum (Observe I am speaking now of a provision or settlement for life, and it would be absurd at my age (30 years) to talk of anything else). At present with 60 pounds per ann. I should have something to spare to exercise my better feelings in relieving the necessities

¹ Lord Lonsdale died May 24, 1802: this, and her brother's projected marriage, made D. anxious to be independent.

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of others, I might buy a few books, take a journey now and then—all which things though they do not come under the article of absolute necessities, you will easily perceive that it is highly desirable that a person of my age and with my education should occasionally have in her power. As to the *mode* of doing this for me, I will say no more than that it seems to be absolutely necessary, to give it any effect, that it should, as much as possible, be independent of accidents of death or any other sort that may befall you or any of my Brothers, its principal object being to make me tranquil in my mind with respect to my future life. Having dealt thus openly with you, my dear Brother, I must add that I should be very loth to be oppressive to you, or any of my Brothers, or to draw upon you for more than you could spare without straitening yourselves—I am sure that John will meet your utmost wishes in the business, and Christopher will do all that he can afford. But when he marries he will be in a different situation from what he is in now, and though he may, and probably will, be as rich or richer even as a married man, yet this is uncertain; therefore he may not be able to make a *permanent* and unconditional engagement. I received 10£ from him the year before last, and 20£ last year, and he promised me the same sum annually as long as he should continue a Fellow of Trinity.

You never talk about coming to see us—I wish you would—Grasmere is a sweet place, and you would have plenty of sport in fishing, if you have not lost the art. We have been advised to send a statement of our case to Lord Lonsdale's Executors and Heirs. Mr. Clarkson talked to my Uncle Myers about it, who approves of its being done, but William will write to you about it.

In a fortnight's time we are going into Yorkshire to Mr. Hutchinson's to spend a couple of months before William is married—he will be married just before we return home. Pray write before we go—I shall stand in need of the money which John intended for me, having calculated upon it—The sum he gave me reason to expect to receive by this time was twenty pounds—God bless you!

I am my dear Brother,

Your affect^o Sister
D. Wordsworth.

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(*W. writes*)

My dear Brother,

I am told that Lord Lonsdale has ordered in his will all his *just* debts to be paid. These are probably book-debts or such as a jury of the County have determined or shall determine to be just. Of course I am afraid ours will not be included in the list. But surely it must be possible to do something in this affair.—How does our claim stand with respect to the statute of limitations, or what quantity of legal right have we? Has the bill been sent in from time to time to keep up our demand? If we cannot press the affair upon the grounds of a legal debt would it not be proper to draw up a memorial stating the case—exactly as it is, and have it presented with the recommendation of some of my Uncle Wm's Friends or Christopher's (the Bishop of Norwich for example) to Sir William Lowther, or Lord Lonsdale's chief representatives whoever they may be. Do take this into immediate consideration. If you will furnish us with a plain history of the case Christopher and I could easily draw up a memorial immediately and have it presented in the name of us all.

I suppose you have not had so bitter a frost as we had after the middle of May or you would not have doubted but that when I said next summer I meant the present. God bless you!

Your very affectionate Br

W. Wordsworth

You cannot but see the expediency of what I have said concerning the memorial. It cannot do us harm and may do good. It would be proper to state the utter destitution of my Sister on account of the affair.

W. W.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

132. D. W. and W. W. to Mary and Sara Hutchinson
MS.

M(—) K(—)

Monday 14th June [1802]

(*D. writes*)

My beloved Friends

I have but a sorry tale to begin with, but, as I never deceive you it must come foremost. It is four o'clock and I have scarcely

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been out of bed two hours today. I cannot well account for it, but I slept badly last night, and as soon as I had got myself dressed I felt so sick that I must go to bed again. I drank three cups of tea and lay in a sort of pleasant half dose till I was roused by your sweet letter, my dear Mary ; a man on horseback stopped at the door with it, and William brought it upstairs to me, and sitting by my bed side (Maister John's bed) read it to me. You must know that we have changed rooms, my regular sleeping bed is William's, I make John's my sick bed. I feel pretty well now except that I have a kind of stupefaction and headache about me, a feeling of something that has been amiss. I hope Molly is getting better. William has slept well these two nights, and he looks well ; this is at all times my best joy, and really it is almost a pleasure to be ill, he is so good and loving to me. I have had a bason of Broth to my dinner, which seems to settle well with me, so be under no alarm—I intend to state my case to our physician Coleridge tonight, and perhaps he may send me some Castor Oil and Bark to take.

Now for a little history of what has passed since I wrote last to you, which was on Wednesday, a long time for me, I have seldom been so long lately. It rained all Wednesday—The Lloyds called in a Chaise, luckily we did not see them ; we are determined to cut them entirely as far as Will goes ; there is one chain about us, Priscilla,¹ but she shall only drag us to Brathay about once a year. I walked with Ellen to Mr. Simpson's the next day, she went home over Kirkstone—I set her to Rydale—and in the evening Coleridge came over Grisdale Hawes with a wallet of books—he had had a furious wind to struggle with, and had been attacked by a vicious cow, luckily without horns, so he was no worse—he had been ill the day before—but he looked and *was* well—strong he must have been for he brought a load over those Fells that I would not have carried to Ambleside for five shillings. Mr. Simpson was with us when he came in—it was about 7 o'clock, William had been tired with talking to Mr S., who had drunk tea with us, and had slept miserably, so he looked ill, and was out of spirits, and C. was shocked by his appearance

¹ Christopher W. became engaged to Priscilla Lloyd in 1800: they were married in the autumn of 1804.

—he was better the next day, and C. stayed with us till Saturday. I talked with him about Mrs. C., told him of the letter I had written etc etc., and of our determination not to go to Greta Hall—he said something about going as lodgers for a short time; I said I could not see any good whatever to arise from this, and as I was so fully determined he pressed nothing upon me. He said he would look at Brow Top house and there we rested—it is evident he had much rather have us at Greta Hall than Brow Top—but I am *sure* that the former would do nothing but harm, and alas I have little hope from the latter, but we will talk of this when we meet. Mrs. Coleridge is a most extraordinary character—she is the lightest weakest silliest woman! She sent some clean clothes on Thursday to meet C. (the first time she ever did such a thing in her life) from which I guess that she is determined to be attentive to him—she wrote a note, saying not a word about my letter, and all in her very lightest style—that she was sorry the Wilkinsons were from home etc etc. . . . she concludes ‘my love to the Ws—’ Is not it a hopeless case? So insensible and so irritable she never can come to good and poor C.! but I said I would not enter on this subject, and I will not.

I am quite concerned that my letters to you should be so delayed. I sent the letter you received on Wednesday by Fletcher on Saturday—On Tuesday I sent another which you ought to have received on Thursday, and on Thursday I sent another, the last which I have written to you. This will go tomorrow, and be sent by Keswick, you ought to have it on Thursday.

Coleridge left us on Saturday—we went with him to the foot of the Raise, but a heavy shower coming on we turned back—he would be sadly wet. I got a cloak at Mr. Simpson’s, came home, and made bread and pies, and in the evening I walked with our own dear Love as far as Rydale hill, the view of Rydale—perhaps this was too much, for I was not quite so well yesterday. I wrote poems all day, and in the evening we walked long on our favourite path in the [? eye] of the whole vale; then in John’s Grove with the full moon in the dark trees. We thought of you, dear, dear, Friends—before the next full moon we shall have been close together, and perhaps we may see her beautiful round full above your grove. It is now 5 o’clock—We have our Haircutter

below stairs, William is reading the Leech-gatherer to him. God love you, my dearest Friends—Thank you both over and over again for your letters. I *could* write far, *far*, more, but William says it does me no good. I intend to take one of Sara's white gowns with me into France, and a coloured one of my own. The Habit will be too hot to wear there I think. I was afraid indeed that travelling in it would spoil it.

(*W. writes*)

My dear Mary,

I shall say nothing about your letter and Sara's because Dorothy in expressing her feelings will express mine also. Your objection to the word *view*¹ is ill founded ; substitute the word *see*, and it does not express my feeling. I speak as having been much impressed, and for a *length of time*, by the sight of the old man—*view* is used with propriety because there is continuousness in the thing—for example had I seen a man shoot at a bird with the point of his gun behind his back, the action being instantaneous, I should say, The like I did never *see*—I speak in this place with the feeling upon me of having been, and being absolutely then, *viewing* the old man—'Sickness had by him',² I know not why you object to—The poem is throughout written in the language of men—'I suffered much by a sickness had by me long ago' is a phrase which anybody might use, as well as 'a sickness which I had long ago'.

In the Poem on leaving Grasmere is a stanza which I am sure none of you have understood. I find neither D. nor C. understand it. But first correct the first stanza thus:

Farewell, thou little nook of mountain ground,
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
One side of our whole Vale with grandeur rare.

After the words 'blessed life which we lead here' insert the following stanza—

Dear spot! which we have watched [etc. as Oxf. W., p. 106]

¹ The word 'view' only occurs in *Resolution and Independance*, stanza 9, omitted after 1815. It is there used as a noun. M. H. must have criticized its use as a verb in the early (lost) draft of the poem.

² *Res. and Ind.*, l. 69.

And oh most constant, yet most fickle Place
That hast a wayward heart, as thou dost shew
To them who look not daily on thy face,
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st when we forsake thee, let them go etc

I have been obliged to alter the last stanza thus for both C. and D. supposed the word 'scorner' not to apply to myself, as I meant it, but any casual visitor, Tourist for example. This idea is as wretchedly mean as the other is beautiful. I have no doubt however that you certainly understood it as C. and D. have done, as my Idea was not developed as it ought to have been, and as I hope it is now. I am for the most part uncertain about my success in *altering* Poems; but in this case by the additional stanza I am sure I have produced a great improvement—'Tell me your opinion—'Primrose vest' cannot stand. I should never have thought of such an expression but in a Spenserian poem, Spenser having many such expressions—But here it cannot stand, if it were only on account of 'saffron coat', an expression beautiful and appropriate. Let it stand thus:

Here with its primroses the steep rock's breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky—

and thus the beautiful line is preserved.

W. W.

My dear Sara

I am exceedingly sorry that the latter part of the Leech-gatherer has displeased you, the more so because I cannot take to myself (that being the case) much pleasure or satisfaction in having pleased you in the former part. I will explain to you in prose my feeling in writing that Poem, and then you will be better able to judge whether the fault be mine or yours or partly both. I describe myself as having been exalted to the highest pitch of delight by the joyousness and beauty of Nature and then as depressed, even in the midst of those beautiful objects, to the lowest dejection and despair. A young Poet in the midst of the happiness of Nature is described as overwhelmed by the thought of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men, viz Poets—I think of this till I am so deeply

impressed by it, that I consider the manner in which I was rescued from my dejection and despair almost as an interposition of Providence. 'Now whether it was by peculiar grace A leading from above'—A person reading this Poem with feelings like mine will have been awed and controuled, expecting almost something spiritual or supernatural—What is brought forward? 'A lonely place, a Pond' 'by which an old man *was*, far from all house or home'¹—not stood, not sat, but '*was*'—the figure presented in the most naked simplicity possible. This feeling of spirituality or supernaturalness is again referred to as being strong in my mind in this passage—'*How came he here* thought I or what can he be doing?'¹ I then describe him, whether ill or well is not for me to judge with perfect confidence, but this I can *confidently* affirm, that, though I believe God has given me a strong imagination, I cannot conceive a figure more impressive than that of an old Man like this, the survivor of a Wife and ten children, travelling alone among the mountains and all lonely places, carrying with him his own fortitude, and the necessities which an unjust state of society has entailed upon him. You say and Mary (that is you can say no more than that) the Poem is *very well* after the introduction of the old man; this is not true, if it is not more than very well it is very bad, there is no intermediate state. You speak of his speech as tedious: everything is tedious when one does not read with the feelings of the Author—'*The Thorn*' is tedious to hundreds; and so is the *Idiot Boy* to hundreds. It is in the character of the old man to tell his story in a manner which an *impatient* reader must necessarily feel as tedious. But Good God! Such a figure, in such a place, a pious self-respecting, miserably infirm, and [] Old Man telling such a tale!

My dear Sara, it is not a matter of indifference whether you are pleased with this figure and his employment; it may be comparatively so, whether you are pleased or not with *this Poem*; but it is of the utmost importance that you should have had pleasure from contemplating the fortitude, independence, persevering spirit, and the general moral dignity of this old man's character. Your feelings upon the Mother, and the Boys with

¹ These quotations come from an early (lost) draft of the poem. D. W.'s *Journal* (July 2 and 4) refers to its alterations and completion.

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the Butterfly, were not indifferent: it was an affair of whole continents of moral sympathy. I will talk more with you on this when we meet—at present, farewell and Heaven for ever bless you!

W. W.

(*D. writes*)

Dear Sara

When you happen to be displeased with what you suppose to be the tendency or moral of any poem which William writes, ask yourself whether you have hit upon the real tendency and true moral, and above all never think that he writes for no reason but merely because a thing happened—and when you feel any poem of his to be tedious, ask yourself in what spirit it was written—whether merely to tell the tale and be through with it, or to illustrate a particular character or truth etc etc.

I am glad that you have found out how to bake bread in my way—we never want yeast now. Do not be uneasy about my fatigues in baking—Molly manages the oven entirely and as well as I can.

We have had no letter from Montagu; till we hear we cannot fix our time. I fear we shall not be able to leave Grasmere¹ before Wednesday. Continue to write, and by Keswick according to your best calculation—I hope we shall have a letter tomorrow.

8 o'clock—Monday night—God bless you both! I now feel quite comfortable—Love to Tom. I shall bring very few clothes—I shall trust to Sara's wardrobe.

(*W. adds*)

I have written to my Uncle Cookson to ask him to press Richard to send us a statement of the Case, if he approves of the memorial.²

Address: Miss Hutchinson, Gallow Hill, near Wykeham, Malton, Yorkshire.

MS. 133. *D. W. to Richard W.*

Gallow Hill Saturday morning 17th July [1802]

My dear Brother,

We arrived at Gallow Hill yesterday Evening after a very pleasant journey. We had the pleasure of finding all our friends

¹ They left Grasmere on July 9.

² v. previous letter.

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in good health. As no letter had come from you when we left Penrith to William, and as we have not found one on our arrival here, we conclude you have not received any answer from Mr Richardson of Lowther. I write to you now respecting the money which I am to receive on my Brother John's account; I am sorry to be obliged to trouble you with another letter about it, but I know you cannot take it ill when I have transcribed a part of one of my Brother John's letters, written a few days before he sailed from which you will judge how much reason I had to expect that the money would be regularly forthcoming. He says 'I am sorry I cannot let you have any money at present or provide for you more than the ten pounds every half year during my absence.'

In one of your late letters to William you said you were sorry you could not enclose the money for me which John intended for me. In consequence of this I have thought it might be more convenient if I were to *draw* upon you for the money, to be paid some weeks hence, and I have borrowed the twenty pounds of Mr Coleridge to pay off a Bill which I wished not to leave unpaid when I left home, and that I might bring something with me for other expenses. A Draft upon you, drawn on the 26th or 27th of this month, payable two months after Date, will answer Mr Coleridge's purpose as well as the money at this time, therefore, with your permission, I will desire *Mr Coleridge* himself to draw upon you for the Sum 20£ to be paid 2 months after Date. Pray be so good as to write to me by the next post to inform me whether you will accept his draft in order that I may write to him immediately to give him permission to draw on you. He has a Debt to pay on the 26th or 27th of this month which he can as well pay with a Draft as in any other way.

On my arrival here I found a letter from our Friend and Kinsman Sam Ferguson, he is just married to a Miss Day of Suffolk, the sister of his partner. He is about to send me a present of half a dozen silver table spoons.

William joins me in kind love to you. I remain, my dear Brother,

Your very affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth

William has received a letter from you dated July 5th and

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directed to Keswick. Pray direct to us at Mr Hutchinson's Gallow Hill near Wykeham, Malton, Yorkshire.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 134. D. W. to Mary Hutchinson

Sunday afternoon September [12th or 19th 1802]

My dearest Mary

We returned from Windsor yesterday evening and repaired immediately to Staple Inn where we were informed by Richard's clerk that our dear John was arrived and in perfect health. We hastened towards our own Lodging and just as we entered the Temple Court we met Richard and John who were walking backwards and forwards by the light of the moon and the lamps. I could just see enough of John to know that he looked uncommonly well, and when we got him into Paper Buildings and had lighted the candles I saw that he was grown fat and looked very handsome. His voyage has not been so good as we expected, but God be thanked he is in excellent spirits, and we all hope steadily for better things. He himself will probably give you some account of the voyage—I shall leave half this paper for him.¹ We spent our time very pleasantly at Windsor. My Uncle and Aunt both are very well. My Uncle scarcely looks older, and my Aunt is less changed than I could have expected. The four children whom we saw are as fine tempered children as I was ever with in my whole life. Mary is a lovely girl, very affectionate and kind. I shall tell you nothing more till we meet, except the day of our departure, and as soon as that is fixed I will write to you again. We shall certainly leave London before the end of the week, but as we can see a good deal of John, he having no business at present, we cannot find in our hearts to leave him till we

¹ *At end of D.'s letter John has written:* I have been reading your Letter over and over again, my dearest Mary, till tears have come into my eyes and I know not how to express myself—Thou art a kind and dear Creature. —But whatever fate befall me I shall love thee to the last, and bear thy memory with me to the grave

Thine afft.
John Wordsworth

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have been a few days together. We shall write to Christopher tomorrow to desire him to come to us.—We left him at Windsor. We shall receive your letter on Wednesday about the Gig, and shall be able to do the business ourselves if Tom chooses to buy one.

God bless you both, my dearest Mary and Sara!

D. Wordsworth

Our kind love to Tom and Joanna.

I shall write to Coleridge to tell him of John's arrival.

MS.

135. D. W. to Jane Marshall

K(—)

Gallow Hill, September 29th 1802

My dear Friend,

I cannot express how grievously I am mortified at not having had the happiness of seeing you when you were at Scarborough. We reached Gallow Hill on Friday evening, and truly distressed I was indeed to learn that you had been here the Sunday before and were gone. What a pleasure would it have been to me to see my old friend and her dear little children!

My Brother desires me to send his kind remembrances to you and Mr. Marshall and to assure you that he was exceedingly sorry that he had not the pleasure of seeing you both.

I should have written to you from London, but that I always indulged the hope of meeting you here and at Scarborough, and was always, also, unable to speak with any certainty of the time of our return. We were detained in London by a succession of unexpected events, first the arrival of my Brother Christopher, then of my Brother John, and last of all (which was, indeed, the only unfortunate one) by my being exceedingly unwell, in a violent cold caught by riding from Windsor in a long-bodied coach with 12 passengers. This cold detained us in town till last Wednesday. I am now perfectly well, except that I do not feel myself strong, and am very thin, but my kind friends help me to take such good care of myself that I hope soon to become as strong as anybody.

We leave Gallow Hill on Monday morning, immediately after

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my Brother William's marriage, we expect to reach Grasmere on Wednesday evening. William, Mary and I go together in a post chaise, and after Mr. Hutchinson's harvest is over (when we shall have got completely settled in our own home) he and his sister Sara will follow us and spend some time at Grasmere and Keswick. My dear Jane, if this letter reaches you before next Monday you will think of me, travelling towards our own dear Grasmere with my most beloved Brother and his wife. I have long loved Mary Hutchinson as a sister, and she is equally attached to me; this being so, you will guess that I look forward with perfect happiness to this connection between us, but, happy as I am, I half dread that concentration of all tender feelings, past, present, and future which will come upon me on the wedding morning. There never lived on earth a better woman than Mary H. and I have not a doubt but that she is in every respect formed to make an excellent wife to my Brother, and I seem to myself to have scarcely any thing left to wish for but that the wedding was over, and we had reached our home again. We have, indeed, been a long time absent. It was, however, a delightful thing to us to see all our Brothers, particularly John, after his return from India. He was in perfect health and excellent spirits. We spent two days with my Uncle and Aunt Cookson at Windsor, and saw Mary and their three youngest children, as good and as sweet a set of children as ever I was with. Mary is a delightful, lovely, affectionate, and sensible girl. My Uncle and Aunt were both well, my Uncle looks scarcely worse than when I left Forncett. We did not see the Nicholsons. I knew that Caroline¹ (whom I should have liked dearly to see and whom I love and respect very much) was at Guildford, and I guessed that the rest of the family were there, it being the time of year in which they always are, therefore I did not attempt to seek out their house.

No doubt you have heard that we have every prospect of settling our affairs with Lord Lowther entirely to our satisfaction. Our claim *in law* is as good as ever, and, what is of more consequence, Lord L. is a just man and disposed to repair as much as lies in his power, the damage done by his predecessor.

¹ i.e. Caroline Nicholson, not, as K. supposes, Caroline Vallon.

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I am going to write to Mrs. Rawson this afternoon. Remember me kindly to your sister Catherine, and all your sisters—again my love to your husband, and kisses to all your children. God bless you my dear Jane! Your affectionate and faithful friend,

D. Wordsworth

Address: Mrs Marshall, Leeds.

M. G. K. 136. W. W. to Correspondent unknown

Nov 1802.

Tell John¹ when he buys Spenser, to purchase an edition which has his 'State of Ireland' in it. This is in prose. This edition may be scarce, but one surely can be found.

Milton's Sonnets (transcribe all this for John, as said by me to him) I think manly and dignified compositions, distinguished by simplicity and unity of object and aim, and undisfigured by false or vicious ornaments. They are in several places incorrect, and sometimes uncouth in language, and, perhaps, in some, inharmonious; yet, upon the whole, I think the music exceedingly well suited to its end, that is, it has an energetic and varied flow of sound crowding into narrow room more of the combined effect of rhyme and blank verse than can be done by any other kind of verse I know of. The Sonnets of Milton which I like best are that to *Cyriack Skinner*; on his *Blindness*; *Captain or Colonel*; *Massacre of Piedmont*; *Cromwell*, except two last lines; *Fairfax*, &c.

MS. 137. D. W. to Richard W. and John W.

To R. W.

Christmas Day 1802 Grasmere

My dear Brother,

I have this day drawn upon you for the sum of 15£ it being my Birthday. I considered your silence, after the receipt of my letter in which I asked your permission to draw upon you for this

¹ J. W. seems to have written for directions what books to buy to carry with him on his next voyage. The letter is probably addressed to R. W.

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money as a grant of that permission, and will thank you beforehand for your kindness to me. You will smile at the Bill when you see it, it is done in such an unusual style, not as if I had had large dealings in money concerns. When I get my *fortune* settled upon me I shall be more familiar with these things and do them with the due forms. I have drawn the Bill payable to Miss S. Hutchinson or order at two months after date. So wishing health and happiness to you and all of us and many a merry Christmas I will say no more of this matter.

We had a letter from John the other day written when he was just on the point of going down to Gravesend. We were much pleased to hear that his Investment was likely to sell for more money than he had expected when we were in Town. I hope we shall at last have the pleasure of knowing that he has not made such a very bad voyage. You may be sure I was exceedingly delighted with John's account of the state of our affairs with Lord Lowther. Of course you will let us know as soon as any further steps are taken. It will be a great comfort to me when proposals are fairly made and security given. William and Mary are very well. I am quite recovered from my late illness and I hope to continue in good health by taking scrupulous care of myself.—I continue to drink wine though not in so large a quantity as I did. I find myself stronger and better for it, but I hope in the summer I shall be able to leave it off again.

I was very sorry to hear that my Uncle's family of five children should have been so ill. Have you been at Windsor lately? The weather is excessively cold, a black frost with a keen wind. The Lake has a thin covering of ice, if the frost continues so keen a few days longer it will soon be fit to skate upon. We hope you will keep your word, and come down into the North next Summer. William and Mary join with me in kind love to you. God bless you, my dear Richard,

Believe me Your affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

I shall write a few lines to John on the other side which, if he is still at Gravesend and you have an opportunity, you will forward to him.

CHRISTMAS DAY 1802

To J. W.

Christmas Day—Grasmere

My dear John

We thank you for your letter which gave us great pleasure on account of the good news about your investment. You promised to write to us again from your Ship. I wish you may keep your word, but if you do not, I hope you will write as soon as you return to London. I am going to write to Miss Lamb about the Dictionary, and as soon after you receive it as you can without inconvenience of course you will send off the Box, which we shall receive gladly. You do not say a word about coming to see us. I look anxiously through all your letters to find out some hope that you will come. Coleridge arrived at Grasmere on Friday morning with Mr Wedgewood. They stayed with us about half an hour and William accompanied them [?up part] of the Rays in their Chaise—Mr Wedge[wood was] dreadfully ill, he is worn to skin and Bone, it is an affecting sight to see him for he is a very good man, and he cannot be long in this world. Coleridge looked much better than when he left home, but I am afraid he will soon grow as ill as ever in that miserably cold and ill built house of his. Mrs C. was brought to bed of a fine girl on Thursday morning at six o'clock. She and the Child both doing very well. We were the first to communicate this intelligence to poor Coleridge.

Old Molly is as blithe as a Lark. She is very loquacious when she begins to talk about 'Maister John'—She generally ends her discourse with 'When you write to him mind you give my very best compliments to him, *poor* Maister John!' and then a tear often starts into her eye, and she flies off to something else as blithe as ever she was. Old Mrs Simpson talks a great deal about you. She is very much broken down by her illness. All the Simpsons remember you with great affection. We have had scarcely any company but them since we came home, a mighty comfort! The Lloyds have called three times, but we have not any of us been at Brathay—William and Mary however *must* go next week. It is too long a walk at present for either Sara or me, though we have both cast off our illnesses.

We all join in best love—Do write soon—Ever your affection-

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ate sister Dorothy Wordsworth, who wishes you many and many a happy year from the bottom of her heart.

William has written some more Sonnets—Perhaps you may see them in the Morning Post—If they do not appear there we will send them to you.

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq^{re}, No. 11 Staple Inn,
London.

MS.

138. W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere Febry Wednesday 23rd [1803]

Dear Richard,

I return you my best thanks for your last kind letter. Dorothy and I are so perfectly satisfied with your manner of conducting the business, that we leave the conclusion of it to your judgement entirely, giving you on our part full authority to close with Mr Graham upon his offer of 8500£, or in case you cannot get that on the last resort, 8000£, if you are satisfied, will satisfy us. This you will take as our opinion finally upon the subject.

I have carefully reviewed all you have stated on the subject, and I do not know but that it might be well for me to say no more upon it; such was my intention at least when I began this letter. Upon second thoughts I will however add a few words for your consideration, I not speaking as a man of business but with the plain understanding of a common person.

I do not know upon what principle Mr Graham proceeds when he fixes upon 8500£ as the sum to be paid; I have no doubt, however, that he goes upon some rules by which professional men are guided in like cases. This I mean in part: for it is evident he does not consider the case merely as a man of business; that is, he does not merely look at what we could recover in a court of Law, else he would be for making still larger deductions from the Bill as sent in. It is clear that he looks at the case with the feelings also of a just man, attending to the claim which we have in moral equity. He then being disposed to deal not unfeelingly but liberally with us, it becomes us to shew to him and Lord Lowther that we have a proper sense of their handsome

conduct, and have a likespirit of liberality in ourselves, and therefore are prepared to admit that a considerable deduction should be made.—At the same time before Mr Graham finally determines what this deduction should be it might be proper perhaps respectfully to remind him that no money can ever make us complete amends for the loss which we have sustained; I do not speak of the hardships and anxieties etc—these I leave entirely out of the question, but the mere comparative value of the money to us now when set against the service it might have done us 15 years back. No doubt Mr Graham must have thought of this, and you have hinted it to him; and all I mean is simply that when you finally settle the matter you should remind him of it. Even looking at it in the most naked point of view Mr G. will admit that with a few deductions upon things which ought not to have been charged we are 10380£ poorer from Lord Lonsdale having refused to pay a just debt. He feels disposed to repair this loss as much as may be done with justice to Lord Lowther, and to settle the affair on liberal terms. We are disposed to be liberal also, that is to show that we meet Lord Lowther in his amicable wishes, there then can be no difficulty. If Mr Graham be satisfied that 8500£ is an adequate allowance having taken everything into consideration, let it be settled so. Or if nothing better can be done take 8000£.

Your letter to Lord L. was very judicious and an excellent Letter. Of course you yourself will take out administration.

Montagu owes me 454£, of this 300£ is annuity—the rest I have at present no security for. Montagu pays me 13£ a Qr, this he does regularly, and has done or very nearly that for the last three years. Of the above 454£ 154 is arrears, the other 100£ I have no security for. Montagu paid us 50£ arrears last summer and has promised 50£ more to be paid next summer. I shall press hard upon him as you have desired and I hope I may get 150£ from him, as to the annuity I am afraid I shall be unable to have that 300£ repaid. But I will do my best.

By the Bye when you settle with Mr Graham you will remember that a considerable interest must be due since the bills were delivered to Mr Richardson. Of course some allowance must be made on that score.

FEBRUARY 1803

Dorothy is in good health and high spirits. We were agreeably surprized with a sight of Cooke the other day, he is now with us and sitting in the room at this moment. He desires to be remembered to you and John. Dorothy and Mary send their best love to you and John. Tell John that Dorothy wrote to him just after her return from Eusemere a fortnight ago.

I have not heard from John, as soon as I do I will write you immediately on his business.

I remain

your affectionate Brother

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq^{re}, No. 11 Staple Inn,
London.

MS.

139. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere March 28 1803

My dear Brother,

We have for some time past been in daily and somewhat anxious expectation of a letter from you or John, we have, however, guessed that *you*, at least, waited till you could have the pleasure of informing us that the affair was *completely* settled with L^d Lowther and Mr Graham. A few days ago we received a Letter from Mr Cooke (whom we are in daily expectation of seeing at Grasmere) which informed us that L^d L had 'in the handsomest manner sent you a draft for 3000£', and would conclude the Business on his Return to Town. No doubt you had waited for this event. But we wish very much to hear something about John, now that the time of his departure draws so very near. Pray tell him that he *must*, however busy he is, contrive to steal half an hour to tell us how he is going on. Also tell him that we are afraid that in his hurry of Business he may forget to send us the Box of Tea, which we should be very sorry for, both as it will be of real value and service to us, and, still more, as we shall have much pleasure and enjoyment from it as coming from him.

We were very sorry to hear from Mr Cooke that you had been

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extremely ill in the Influenza. The season has been very unhealthy here, as well as in London. The Doctors scarcely ever were so busy and great numbers who have not more serious disorders have had and still have very bad colds. Mary has been at Penrith and Eusemere almost a month: we expect her and Sara Hutchinson at home on Friday. William has been very unwell in a cold which still hangs upon him with toothache, earache etc. etc. I have been very well in the midst of all this disease and I hope I am growing a strong woman again. My looks are much more healthy than when I was in London.

I indulge the hope that we shall see you at Grasmere before the summer is over, and expect you will make a long stay with us, as you have been so slow about coming. Give our kind love to John and believe me my dear Richard your ever affectionate Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth.

P.S. William made an application for 1,500£ for John's use, but could not procure it: he has, however, been informed since that if he had looked about properly at Candlemas and a little before, he might most likely have procured it without difficulty in this country. Pray let the parcel or parcels which have come for us from Miss Lamb remain in your Chambers till you have an opportunity of sending them down. If John sends us the Box of Tea they might come at the same time.

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq^{re}, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS.

140. D. W. to Richard W.

April 22 1803.

My dear Brother,

Having received no answer to my request that, in case my share of the 3000£ already paid by Lord Lowther were taken out by my Brother John you would give me security for the same, and John having written to William to say that he *must* have the whole of the money and at the same time having requested William to lend him his share without Security, and having made no mention

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of my name in this Request of his, I conclude that you consent to give me security for my share.

My sentiments respecting the impropriety of my running the risque of losing this money by which means I might forfeit my independence without any means of reinstating myself in it, are exactly the same as they have always been, and I have no doubt that the argument which I laid before you must have seemed to you to be unanswerable; but I should have been very glad that you had written to me before, as I have (though with full confidence in your affectionate regard for my comfort and independence) expected with some impatience that I should hear from yourself that you really did approve of my sentiments.

I beg, my dear Brother, that you will have the goodness to answer this letter immediately. William also desires me to say that he begs you will reply to the several particulars of his last letter, as soon as you can find time. He is especially anxious to hear what you have to say respecting the final settlement.

William joins with me in kind love to you. I remain, my dear Richard,

Your ever affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 141. D. W. to Richard W. and John W.

Grasmere, Saturday morning, April 30th [1803]

My dear Brother,

Some time ago I received a letter from my brother John in which he informed me that Mr Graham had promised to pay 3000£ in a short time, that this money was to be advanced for his (John's) accommodation, and that you, Richard, would be Security for William's share and mine. William answered this letter, and I desired him to tell John that as you would give me security for my money, I could not possibly have any objection to letting him have it. Some time after this you wrote to William, saying that you could not undertake to be answerable to all John's creditors, or something to this effect, and that therefore William and I had only to say 'whether John should have our

money or not'. To this I replied immediately that I was not willing to lend the money unless you would undertake to s[ecure] me from the loss of it, and for this reason ; that if I we[re to] lose it I should forfeit my independence without having any means of reinstating myself in it. I thought you could not possibly have any objection to give me the security I desired if there were little or no risque, and that if there *were* risque, and in proportion to the quantity of that risque, you would think me the last person in the world who ought to be called upon by my Brothers to bear it. About three weeks elapsed after I had written this answer to your letter before I heard anything more of the business, and last Wednesday but one William received a letter from John in which he informed him that he *must* have the whole of the money, and asked him to lend him his share without any security but his own. William replied to John that he did consent that he should take his money upon those terms. As John made no mention of my Name in this request, and, as I had not received an answer to my letter in which I gave you my sentiments respecting the impropriety of my running any risque we concluded that you had no objection to giving me the security. I wrote to you in order that I might be positively assured from yourself that I was right in this supposition. I received your answer yesterday. You say 'the question is *who* is to support John? Am I to run all the risque? William and you seem to think that I ought: John, Christopher, and myself think otherwise.' To this I reply that I am sure that William has never thought that it was fit you should *run all the risque*, only that it was *more* fit that John should call upon you to run a *further* risque rather than on him, for this plain reason that if you lost the whole of the money you would be (taking in your profession) many, many degrees richer than he is, or has any grounds for hoping to be ; and for me, I told you that I thought I ought not to be called upon to bear *any part* of the risque. I still entertain the same opinion, and I have gone through the whole of the affair because I wish that this letter should be considered by you and John, and Christopher as a record of my sentiments, and I beg that you will shew it to both of [them] and I should wish at the same time that Christopher should see the letters which I have written to you before on the subject.

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Having said thus much I dismiss this matter entirely; it has been a very painful thing to me to suppose the possibility of your permitting me to lose any part of my small independence while I have thus been obliged to oppose my sentiments to yours. At the same time I must add that, though you have not the courage to take upon yourself the additional charge of my share of this money I have the most entire confidence that, even though you should lose the whole of your money lent to John if I should lose mine, you will feel, while you have it in your power to make anything by your own industry, or anything is left to you of the estate of my Father, that, as long as I am poor or in a state of dependence, I have claims upon you as your only Sister and the only daughter of my Father to which no other claims can be superior.

As John is to take out this money, I have now only to ask if he has provided any means for the payment of the interest during his absence, and if he has not, whether you will consent that I should draw upon you half yearly for it. I should be glad if you would write to me immediately in answer to this.

Give my kindest Love to Christopher, tell him I will write to him as soon as I suppose him to be returned to Cambridge. I remain, my dear Richard, your ever affectionate Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth.

P.S. I shall write a few words below to John which you will be so good as to cut off and forward to him if you do not send [him] the whole of the letter.

My dear John,

Richard has informed me that you are [gone] down to Gravesend, to return no more from your Ship. God send a blessing on you and your whole voyage and bring you back to us again in health and prosperity! We have thought about you continually of late, and have been anxious to hear from you, but, though you have never written to us, we have not supposed that you have thought much less about us than if you had. My Letters to Richard will have explained to you fully my sentiments respecting my money being adventured without Richard's security to me for it; therefore I need say nothing to you about it. I am sure, my dear

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Brother, that I need not speak of my affection for you, of the deep love I bear you, and you know well that there are few sacrifices that I should be unwilling to make on that score. But this is not an affair to be weighed in the balance of my affection for you, nor have I been called upon to advance the money on that score. It is an affair of prudence. As such I have no doubt, and merely as such you have considered it, though we have come to different conclusions.

Sara Hutchinson left us on Thursday. Coleridge is ill in a rheumatic fever, and all his family have got the Influenza. We are all tolerable, but it is a sad unhealthy season and nobody is quite well. My general health is however much better than it was a few months ago. Mary's health is very good on the whole. She and William send their kindest love to you. The Symptons and old Molly never forget to inquire after you. Molly says 'if I could but see Maister John I would send all the money that ever I have for a venture with him'—you must know she has more than seven pounds. Mr Wedgewood has written to Coleridge requesting that you would have the goodness to bring him home a dozen China Pens. They were to be of different sizes, and one of them was to be large enough for some purpose or other but I have forgotten what—I suppose however that it was to be a large one.—Farewell! again and again God bless you. Believe me ever your affectionate Sister Dorothy Wordsworth.

Grasmere May 1st 1803.

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq., No. 11 Staple Inn, London

MS.

142. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 22nd May 1803.

My dear Brother,

We have been for some time exceedingly anxious to hear something about John. We expected an answer to William's letter (which you told us you had forwarded to him) with great impatience; as we have not heard from himself we suppose he must have sailed before the letter reached Gravesend, but we have never seen his ship mentioned in the newspapers. We have been

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uneasy about him on account of the pressing of men ; we were afraid his ship might lose her crew, and John be detained on that account, and now that the War is certain we are still more anxious to know whether he has sailed or not. Pray write to me by return of post and inform me of all particulars respecting him. I cannot express how very anxious I am about him.

We are all well, but the Spring has been a very unseasonable one, cold and dry or intensely hot, and almost everybody has been ill. Mr and Mrs Cooke have been spending a month at Ambleside, they are now at Keswick. I shall be very glad to hear that you are well. Mr Cooke told me that you had been very ill in the Influenza.

There was one part of my last letter to which I wished to receive an answer. I inquired whether John had made any provision for the payment of the Interest of my share of the money during his absence, and if he had not whether you would permit me to draw upon you for it. William and Mary desire their kind love to you. God bless you my dear Brother, believe me ever your affectionate Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

K(—)¹ 143. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Tuesday morning [early June 1803]

My dear Friend,

. . . I reached home before five o'clock on Sunday afternoon, without being in the least heated or fatigued. I daresay Mr. Clarkson was anxious about me, for he would see the clouds upon the tops of the mountains. There they were, but they never touched me, they only made my walk more interesting. They connected the whole vale of Brothers Water, with the sky enclosing it, so that there seemed no other place beyond ; and, indeed, it seemed as beautiful a place as there need be, in a beautiful world. I met William at the top of the hill above our own house. He was on the look-out for me. Mary was at home—Dear creature! she was overjoyed to see me, after this short

¹ The MS. of this letter is not in the B.M.

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absence. She looked much better than she did, when I left her. . . . Our garden is in great beauty. The brooms are covered with blossom, and we have a fine stock of flowers. I wish you could see it at this moment. Then I should wish the rain to stop, so that you might sit on the orchard-seat by the bower. . . . Oh! my dear friend, what a beautiful spot this is! the greenest in all the earth, the softest green covers the mountains even to the very top. Silver How is before my eyes, and I forget that I have ever seen it so beautiful. Every bit of grass among the purple rocks (which are of all shades of purple) is green. I am writing in my own room. Every now and then I hear the chirping of a little family of swallows that have their abode against the glass of my windows. The nest was built last year, and it has been taken possession of again about six weeks ago, needing no repairs whatever. William calls me again. God bless you, my very dear friend. . . .

MS.

144. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 15th June 1803.

My dear Brother,

I am exceedingly sorry that I am obliged to trouble you again respecting money as I am well aware how much your exertions in John's behalf must have straitened you. As for myself, however, I am in absolute want; therefore I know you will excuse me for making this application to you after you have told me that it will be inconvenient to you to spare me anything at present.

Before my Brother William's Marriage, while it was uncertain whether we should receive anything from Lord Lowther, you will remember that I stated to you the necessity which I felt that I should be placed in a state of independence, and to this end Christopher promised to allow me 20£ per annum, and I requested that you would allow me the same sum till the [?time when] our affairs with Lord Lowther should be settled. The last half year however, having been ill and obliged to drink wine, I drew upon you for £15 instead of 10£, and I told you that on Midsummer day I should draw upon you for 10£ more which would make 25£ for the year instead of 20. Now what I have to request of you is

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that you will permit me to draw upon you for 10£ on the 25th of June payable 2 months after Date. The fact is, that, having calculated upon receiving at least the interest of my share of the 8000£ already paid I laid out nearly 20£ in clothes which though necessaries and which I must have had at some time I could have done without a few months longer, as I have hitherto done, going from year to year with a scanty supply. The [clothes I] have bought were chiefly petticoats, shifts etc.

William and Mary are both well, they desire their love. We expect an increase of Family in a short time. My sister will probably be confined before the end of next month.

You never tell us when we are to see you in the North. Believe me, dear Richard,

Your affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

By accident the sending off of this letter was delayed and now I have a happy event to communicate. Mary was safely delivered of a stout healthy Boy at 10 minutes past 6 o'clock yesterday morning, and she and the Child are going on as well as possible. Your nephew is to be called John.—We should be very glad to hear that you would come down this summer and stand Godfather for him in your own person. If you give us any hope the christening is to be put off till that time. If not we shall get somebody else to stand [?with your] permission. The Babe is a true representative of the Wordsworths, for he is very like his Father and our Family. God bless you! D. W.

Sunday afternoon 19th June.

Address: Rich^d Wordsworth Esq^{re}, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 145. W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.

[Grasmere June 26th 1803]

(*W. writes*)

My dear Richard,

Some time before his departure John informed us that he had desired your Clerk to pack up a box for us containing such of my books as were in London, some old clothes, and a new silk hat

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which he had purchased for me. Some small parcels also, I understand, have been sent to your Chambers for Mr Coleridge to come by the same box. I suppose this box has not yet been forwarded, and I now write to entreat that you have the goodness to have it packed up including all my Books, any clothes of your own which you can spare, etc etc. I wish the box to be sent to Beale's Wharf, directed to Mr John Hutchinson, Ham-factor, Stockton upon Tees (for Mr Wordsworth). He will forward it hither by the waggon. You will greatly oblige me by having this done immediately, as Mr Coleridge wants his parcels and I am standing in great need of the hat, which if John should by any accident have forgotten to buy, I beg that by all means you would buy me one and send it by the box. I need not say that especial care must be taken how the hat is packed up.

Some time ago I borrowed 80£ of you to be repaid on the publication of my L. B. This money I should certainly have sent you at the time appointed, but it happened that my friend Coleridge had engaged to write a work for Longman in which he had made some progress, and had taken up from Longman thirty pounds upon the score of this work, when unfortunately he was seized with a complication of gout and rheumatic fever, which by successive fits of sickness has confined him to his bed for nearly half these last nine months, and disabled him from writing the other half. Now, as he had put himself to great expense in order to come and settle in this country on my account, and as I know that the debt to Longman weighed much upon his mind, I thought that, if it were possible to rid him of the Burthen, I ought to do so. I therefore lent him the 80£, that is, desired that Longman would consider it as paid to me. He will shortly be able to repay me, and in the meantime you will consider me as your debtor to the amount of 80£.

Did you receive 3£ from Montagu on my account some time ago? Montagu is yet considerably in arrears with the payment of the annuity: but I have the pleasure of informing you that during the last year I had received above 50£ from him. I hope he will do well; he talks about repaying, or rather says that he will repay the principal as soon as ever he is able, i.e. makes any considerable progress in his profession, or has any place given to

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him, as he has reason to expect. I suppose you continue to pay the insurance on Montagu's life, (setting aside the 30£ for which I wish you to pay yourself regular interest till the principal is repaid). I wish you would have the goodness to remit to me any small sum which may be due to me out of the interest of the money that has been in the stocks, and now, I suppose, is in John's hands, I mean such portion of the interest as shall be due after the insurance on M's life is paid.—The 30£ I hope to be able to repay you from Coleridge very shortly, indeed I am certain I shall if his health should continue as it now is.

I have the pleasure to inform you that the reputation of the L. B. is spreading every day, though slowly, as might be expected from a work so original. A few days ago I had a letter from Mr Fox, in which he says that he read the poems with great pleasure especially those in rime, he is not partial to blank verse. He mentioned Goody Blake etc, the Mad Mother, the Idiot Boy and We are Seven as having given him particular pleasure. I have had high encomiums on the poems from the most respectable quarters, indeed the highest authorities, both in literature, good sense, and people of consequence in the State.—There is no doubt but that if my health should enable me to go on writing I shall be able to command my price with the Booksellers. Longman has written to inform me that the last edition is sold to within 130 copies, and that I must prepare another. As soon as this next shall be disposed of, the copyright will revert to me, and I shall take care to know precisely upon what terms a Bookseller can afford to take it, and he shall not have it a farthing under. These two last editions I have sold for 1 third less than they were worth. My health is middling, Dorothy is well, God bless you.

I am your affectionate Br
W. Wordsworth.

(D. writes)

My dear Brother, When do you intend coming down into the North? It would give us great pleasure to see you here. I have had a very kind letter from Mr Griffith and a present of 10£; he has also sent us a barrel of the best American flour, which has been most acceptable to us.—John wrote to me that he had taken such measures that you would be enabled to receive 10£ half-yearly

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for me at the India House. I do not know when the payment was to begin, but I shall be much obliged to you if you will get it for me, and send it to me regularly as it becomes due. Kitt made me a present of 10£ just before he came down and said that he hoped to be able to allow me 20£ yearly in future, till his marriage. God bless you, my dear R^d—When shall we hear from John? When must we write to him at St Helena?

Your affect. Sister,
D. Wordsworth.

Can you put some pens into the box?

Pray send 6 quires of the largest sized writing paper, for rough draughts: scribbling paper it is called at Cambridge.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

*MS.*¹ 146. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Sunday night 26th June [1803]

My dear Friend,

I was exceedingly hurt that I did not see Mr L² and your Br. and that they did not see our little Babe—I have only one moment to say that Mary and the Child are quite well. She has never ailed anything since his Birth. I hope we shall hear from you in a Day or two—we are anxious about you as you may well believe.

Oh my dear Friend how happy we are in this blessed Infant! He sleeps sweetly all night through, loves the open air—he has been out two hours today at one time, and by snatches at different times all the day through. He is a noble looking Child, has a very fine head, and a beautiful nose and thrives rarely. He takes no food but his mother's milk. Our Nurse left us last Tuesday morning, and we have had no want of her, Mother and Child have gone on so nicely. I have been their sole attendant. The only thing that has let us down is that poor old Molly is very far from well—indeed has been *ill*.—No more—Coleridge is going off to Keswick—not a moment more. God bless you for ever. D. Wordsworth

Address: Mrs Clarkson, Eusemere Hill, Penrith.

¹ MS. not in B.M.

² Probably Mr. Luff.

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MS. 147. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Grasmere. 15th July [1803]

My dear Friend

Mary and I have never ceased to regret that you did not see our own darling Child before your departure from this country. It would have been very sweet to us to think that you had carried away an image of what we so dearly love. When you see him he will be a different creature and we should have liked that you had known perfectly what he is now; or rather what he was then, for he is much grown since that time, though indeed he does not appear to us to be much altered. He has blue eyes, a fair complexion, (which is already very much sunburnt) a body as fat as a little pig, arms that are thickening and dimpling and bracelets at his wrists, a very prominent nose which *will be* like his Father's and a head shaped upon the very same model. I send you a lock of his hair sewed to this letter. To-day we have all been at Church. Mary was *churched* and the Babe christened—Coleridge my Brother Richard and I were Godfathers and Godmother, old Mr Simpson answered for my brother Richard and had a hearty enjoyment of the christening cake, tea and coffee, this afternoon. The child sleeps all night, and is a very good sleeper in the day. I wish you could see him in his Basket which is neither more nor less than a Meat Basket which costs half a crown. In this basket he has (Not like Moses in his cradle of rushes, but in a boat, mind that. W. W.)¹ floated over Grasmere water asleep and made one of a dinner party at the Island, and we often carry it to the orchard-seat where he drops asleep beside us.—My dear Friend, we are very anxious to hear how you have borne the journey. This letter will most likely reach Bury before your arrival there but I hope if it does that you will have written to us before you receive it. We are also very anxious to know the opinion of Physicians respecting your disease and the remedies to be used. Poor Mr Clarkson! I often think of him and his solitude. I hope he goes on with his book which will be [the] only thing that can keep him in comfort. Luff was here for a couple of hours on Thursday and we expect him again to-morrow to meet Coleridge.

¹ Written in the margin of the letter.

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C is much better in health and spirits than he has been for some time past. We expect to set off on our Scotch tour in about ten days—William and C talk of it with thorough enjoyment and I have no doubt I shall be as happy as they when I am fairly off, but I do not love to think of leaving home and parting with the dear Babe who will be no more the same Babe when we return—besides Sara does not come. This is a sad mortification to us particularly as she had given us the strongest reason to expect her. However we still hope for Joanna who can be very easily spared from Gallow hill. Our dear Mary does not look forward to being left alone with one gloomy thought—indeed how should she with so sweet a Babe at her Breast? But both for her sake and Sara's we earnestly wished that they might have been together.—You will rejoice to hear that the affair with Lord Lowther is entirely settled, except for signing releases and a few Law forms. We are to receive eight thousand five hundred pounds. The whole of the money is to be paid in a year. I cannot tell you yet what our Shares will be as there will be some deductions. I will write to you when we are on our Tour—you will like to know what we see and do. God bless you my ever dear Friend. May God restore you to health and may you come back to us with a Body as fit for enjoyment among these noble and quiet Mountains and Vales as your heart is. Best respects to your Father and Mother—Love to your Brother Robert who is a huge favorite of mine, little though he be! and to your dear Son.

Yours ever and ever Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, At Mr Wm Buck's, Bury, Suffolk.

MS. 148. W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.

[15th July] 1803.

(W. writes)

Dear Rich^d,

I am very happy to hear that you have brought the business to what may be considered as a conclusion. The terms perfectly satisfy both Dorothy and myself; and we consider ourselves as under very great obligations to you for your exertions through the whole of the affair.—What I was anxious for, was not so

much the final payment of the money, for this I cared comparatively little, but that security should be given for some specific sum; in order to put the affair as soon as possible out of reach of accident.

As to the disposal of the 1500£ I have no advice to give; it is plain I should think that there can be but one rule; viz. that the money ought to be placed out on *solid* security, and next, at as good a rate of interest as can be procured consistent with that end.

I received a letter from Montague yesterday which *vexed* me much: I find by it that he has been applying to you to advance 300£¹ to be repaid by me out of Lord L's money. He had no authority from me to make this application, and I consider his conduct as very indelicate. If I had wished you to advance money for me, I assuredly should have applied for it myself. Montague continues to pay his annuity regularly, and has held out expectations to me of repaying the principal, but he is not to be depended upon.—Montague continues to owe me 450£, that is 300£ regularly secured on annuity; 100£ for which I have no security, and 50£ arrears which was owing before we came to Grasmere. He has paid me these last 3 years at the rate of 50£ per annum.

We are going to make a tour of 6 weeks in Scotland, Dorothy I and Coleridge. Do not imagine we are going to launch out in expence, we expect it will do our health good, and shall travel with one Horse only. We do not expect to go into a more expensive house for some time than the one we now occupy and therefore can afford to take this recreation.

Your Nephew and Godson was Christened today. Old Mr Sympson a clergyman in our neighbourhood stood for you. The boy is as fine a boy as ever was beheld. This is the involuntary language of every body who sees him. He is very stout, large, healthy, and of uncommonly manly features. We shall have great pleasure in shewing him to you. Dorothy is not quite well, Mary and the child perfectly so. I am Dear Richard your affectionate Br

W. Wordsworth.

(D. writes)

My dear Brother, I am very grateful to you for all the trouble

¹ It is not quite clear if these figures are 30 or 300.

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you have had in this affair, and happy indeed in the conclusion of it. I long to shew you our dear little child and to see you at Grasmere. Yours ever

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 149. *W. W. to Thomas De Quincey*

K. J. (—)

Grasmere, near Kendal, Westmoreland,

July 29th, 1803.

Dear Sir,

Your Letter dated May 31, I did not receive till the day before yesterday (owing I presume to the remissness of Mess^{rs} Longman and Rees, in forwarding it). I am much concerned at this; as though I am sure you would not suppose me capable of neglecting such a Letter, yet still my silence must needs have caused you some uneasiness.

It is impossible not to be pleased when one is told that one has given so much pleasure; and it is to me a still higher gratification to find that my poems have impressed a stranger with such favorable ideas of my character as a man. Having said this, which is easily said, I find some difficulty in replying more particularly to your Letter.

It is needless to say that it would be out of nature were I not to have kind feelings towards one who expresses sentiments of such profound esteem and admiration of my writings as you have done. You can have no doubt but that these sentiments however conveyed to me must have been acceptable; and I assure you that they are still more welcome coming from yourself. You will thus perceive that the main end which you proposed to yourself in writing to me is answered, viz., that I am already kindly disposed towards you. My friendship it is not in my power to give; this is a gift which no man can make, it is not in our own power: a sound and healthy friendship is the growth of time and circumstance, it will spring up and thrive like a wild-flower when these favour, and when they do not it is in vain to look for it.

I do not suppose that I am saying anything which you do not

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know as well as myself. I am simply reminding you of a commonplace truth which your high admiration of me may have robbed, perhaps, of that weight which it ought to have with you.

And this leads me to what gave me great concern, I mean the very unreasonable value which you set upon my writings, compared with those of others. You are young and ingenuous, and I wrote with a hope of pleasing the young, the ingenuous and the unworldly, above all others; but sorry indeed should I be to stand in the way of the proper influence of other writers. You will know that I allude to the great names of past times, and above all to those of our own Country.

I have taken the liberty of saying this much to hasten on the time when you will value my poems not less, but those of others, more. That time, I know, would come of itself, and may come sooner for what I have said, which at all events I am sure you cannot take ill.

How many things there are in a man's character, of which his writings, however miscellaneous, or voluminous, will give no idea. How many thousand things which go to making up the value of a practically moral man, concerning not one of which any conclusion can be drawn from what he says of himself or of others in the World's Ear. You probably would never guess from anything you know of me, that I am the most lazy and impatient Letter-writer in the world. You will perhaps have observed that the first two or three Lines of this sheet are in a tolerably fair, legible hand, and, now every Letter, from A to Z, is a complete rout, one upon the heels of the other. Indeed so difficult do I find it to master this ill habit of idleness and impatience, that I have long since ceased to write any Letters but upon business. In justice to myself and you I have found myself obliged to mention this, lest you should think me unkind if you find me a slovenly and sluggish Correspondent.

I am going with my friend Coleridge and my Sister upon a tour into Scotland for six weeks or two months. This will prevent me hearing from you as soon as I could wish, as most likely we shall set off in a few days. If however you write immediately, I may have the pleasure of receiving your Letter before our departure; if we are gone, I shall order it to be sent after me.—I

JULY 1803

need not add that it will give me great pleasure to see you at Grasmere, if you should ever come this way.

I am, dear sir, with great sincerity and esteem,

Yours sincerely,

W. Wordsworth.

P.S.—I have just looked my letter over, and find that towards the conclusion I have been in a most unwarrantable hurry, especially in what I have said on seeing you here. I seem to have expressed myself absolutely with coldness. This is not in my feeling, I assure you. I shall indeed be very happy to see you at Grasmere, if you ever find it convenient to visit this delightful country. You speak of yourself as being very young; and therefore may have many engagements of great importance with respect to your worldly concerns and future happiness in life. Do not neglect these on any account; but if consistent with these and your other duties you could find time to visit this country, which is no great distance from your present residence, I should, I repeat it, be very happy to see you.

W. W.

Address: Thomas de Quincey Esq^{re}, at Mrs. Best's, Everton, near Liverpool.

MS.

150. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

K(—)

Grasmere. Sunday Oct. 9th [1803]

My dear Friend,

It is a fortnight this day since we returned home after our absence from Mary and the Babe of six weeks—a long long absence it seemed to be, though we were very happy during our tour, particularly the last month, for at first we were but half weaned from home and had not learnt the way of enjoying ourselves—We seemed to consider the whole Tour as a business to be by us performed for some good end or other, but when we had fairly got forward the rambling disposition came upon us and we were sorry to turn back again or rather we wished to go forward. We had a joyful meeting. Mary, though thin was quite well and John had thrived and grown to our very hearts

contentment. We have received your two letters, I cannot express what joy and thankfulness we all felt at the reading of your last which is now about ten days ago, and your husband who left us yesterday morning tells us that he has had later news of you that was equally satisfactory—My dear Friend I thought of you very much while we were in Scotland and wished and vowed to write to you many and many a time. Perhaps Mary may have told you that it was my intention to write while we were on the Tour. So indeed it was and I was even bold enough to hope that I should send you long and entertaining accounts of what we saw and what we did, that might enliven you in your absence from your dear home. I blame myself very much that I never once should have written one word to you, (NB. your letter addressed to me copied by Joanna and sent by Mary [?in the box] not received.) Long letters it was out of my power to write unless I had had a thousand times more activity and strength than I was mistress of, for I was always tired when I reached the Inn at night and glad to put my Body in the state to receive all possible enjoyment of the few comforts a Scotch Inn affords. I was glad to lay my legs up and loll in indolence before the fire. I am happy to tell that Mr Clarkson seemed to be very well when he was with us, though I believe he had been sadly over tired by the Smyths who I find are as active as Race horses and as full of spirits as young kittens. William had met him at Ambleside on Monday with the whole party. William had gone to volunteer his services with the greatest part of the Men of Grasmere—alas! alas! Mary and I have no other hope than that they will not be called upon out of these quiet far off places except in the case of the French being *successful* after their landing, and in that case what matter? We may all go together. But we wanted him to wait till the Body of *the people* should be called. For my part I thought much of the inconvenience and fatigue of going to be exercised twice or thrice a week, however if he really enters into it heart and soul and likes it, that will do him good, and surely there never was a more determined hater of the French nor one more willing to do his utmost to destroy them if they really do come. We do not know at present whether the Grasmere Volunteers are all to be

accepted or not, nor anything about the time and place of their being exercised. Wm returned home at about ten o'clock, left Mr Clarkson at Ambleside and the next morning we received a note from him requesting to borrow our horse for a journey to Muncaster along with Mr Smyth. Mr C arrived here from Muncaster at about four o'clock on Friday afternoon. We could not prevail upon him to stay longer than till he had breakfasted yesterday, but he has promised to come and spend a few days with us just before he goes to Bury. We are sorry to hear that this would not be till the beginning of next month for I daresay you will be almost heartsick with long wishing and waiting. He was anxious to get forward with his book which had been kept back by his visitors. Joanna Hutchinson is still with us. She was to have left us yesterday and John Monkhouse brought a whiskey on Saturday afternoon to carry her to Penrith, but poor Creature! she was far too ill to go. She has never been in strong health since she came to Grasmere, or indeed, perhaps all her life, not in strong *health* but she has had continual head-aches, with tooth-ache, and many symptoms of nervous diseases since she came to Grasmere and on Friday evening she had a hysteric and a fainting fit, attended with many dreadful sensations that made us think of you. Of course John Monkhouse took his Gig back without her and we hope to be able to send her back to Penrith, when she *does* go, in health and strength. William rode over to Keswick yesterday morning to consult Mr Edmundson, who has sent her some medicine. She is better to-day but looks very ill and is very weak. Sara wrote in bad spirits the last time we heard from her, they had just received a Notice from Mr Langley to quit their Farm. You know how much they were all attached to Gallow Hill, so as you will suppose the mere leaving the place will be a great trouble to Sara, but as it was not Tom's intention to remain there after he could get a larger Farm this is not the cause of her distress. They have no other farm to go to and she feels in consequence of being dismissed from their home in this way by a Landlord who had the character of never dismissing a Tenant without some good reason that they have no abiding place, and in short that every thing is unstable in this world. We are anxious for another letter from her, that we

may know whether Tom has formed any plans, or has any expect[ation of] getting another farm. What is most provoking [is] that Mrs Langley wants this Farm into her own hands merely for a little Rural place to carry her fine Ladies to drink tea at, because they admired it and she admired it, and before Tom Hutchinson took it nobody thought anything about it and he has made all the improvements and in short made it the place it is. We had intended while we have our *Carriage*, to have gone to Gallow Hill next spring. If they get a farm no doubt we shall go wherever they are, but this is very uncertain.—William is not yet returned from Keswick. It is almost 8 o'clock and we are expecting him every minute. The little Darling is asleep upstairs upon the Bed brought into the sitting room for poor Joanna and the three are sitting together. I have a nice fire in the little parlour. My dear Friend I wish you were sitting in the chair beside me¹ and I would tell you all about our Scotch Tour and we would talk about little Johnny and all our comforts. We have indeed reason to thank God for having bestowed such a Blessing upon us, he is as fine and healthy a Babe as ever was in Grasmere I verily believe and has a most noble countenance, with as sweet smiles and as pretty ways as any Babe of his age. He has got a blue striped frock on to-day sent him by Bell Addison² and very bonny he looks in it with his little bare head! he is in short coats and without cap. Would that you could see the hair growing upon his dear little head. You cannot think how bonny the bare head looks when he is sucking! His Mother has plenty of milk for him, but she is thin. I wish she was fatter, however she makes no complaints, though indeed neither she nor the child were well last week, or rather looked well for John never was cross, but to-day he looks more healthy than ever and Mary looks well too. We have not seen Coleridge since our return. He is taking a violent medicine in the hope of bringing his disease to a fit of the Gout. M. would tell you that we parted from him at Loch Lomond. He performed miracles after we left him in the way of walking which

¹ Written you.

² The Addisons were related to the Monkhouses. One of them was in partnership with Richard W.

proves an uncommon strength somewhere, but he is often dreadfully ill. William's health was very much amended by our Tour and much we both enjoyed ourselves. I was never so well scarcely in my life till I over fatigued myself with walking, having left the gig to make an excursion on foot and was not as well as I could have wished at my return, but I am now perfectly well though I had an attack on Friday of my old complaint. I had intended telling you about Scotland but I have no room. Everybody asks do you like the Scotch or the English Lakes better? A question [I do not] like to answer. There [is no] comparison to be made where everything is so different except a part of Loch Lomond which is like Ulswater, but there is certainly nothing so *beautiful* in Scotland as parts of this country. Notwithstanding this if any Body should make the same journey that we did, having had fine weather, and not having received a very high pleasure, I should say it was their fault.

I am very glad of Tom's having had the measles. God bless you both.

You must be very patient in [?reading] this or you will never be able to get through with it. I am very glad to hear such good news of Tom, kindest Love to him. Tell him about John. God bless you for ever, do write.

D. W.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson at Mr. Wm. Buck's, Bury, Suffolk.

MS. 151. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont¹
G. K(—) C.

Grasmere, 14th October, 1803.

Dear Sir George,

If any Person were to be informed of the particulars of your kindness to me,—if it were described to him in all its delicacy and nobleness,—and he should afterwards be told that I suffered eight weeks to elapse without writing to you one word of thanks

¹ Sir George Beaumont (1753–1827), a mediocre painter, but a great connoisseur, and a generous patron of the arts. He presented his own collection to the nation and induced the government to found the National Gallery. He was equally interested in poetry and became one of W.'s warmest friends and admirers. In the previous August he had stayed at Keswick and bought a small estate at Applethwaite, near Keswick, to present to W. in order that he might live nearer Coleridge.

or acknowledgment, he would deem it a thing absolutely *impossible*. It is nevertheless true. This is, in fact, the first time that I have taken up a pen, not for writing letters, but on any account whatsoever, except once, since Mr. Coleridge showed me the writings of the Applethwaite Estate, and told me the little history of what you had done for me, the motives, &c. I need not say that it gave me the most heartfelt pleasure, not for my own sake chiefly, though in that point of view it might well be most highly interesting to me, but as an act which, considered in all its relations as to matter and manner, it would not be too much to say, did honour to human nature; at least, I felt it as such, and it overpowered me.

Owing to a set of painful and uneasy sensations which I have, more or less, at all times about my chest, from a disease which chiefly affects my nerves and digestive organs, and which makes my aversion from writing little less than madness, I deferred writing to you, being at first made still more uncomfortable by travelling, and loathing to do violence to myself, in what ought to be an act of pure pleasure and enjoyment, viz., the expression of my deep sense of your goodness. This feeling was, indeed, so strong in me, as to make me look upon the act of writing to you, not as the work of a moment, but as a business with something little less than awful in it, a task, a duty, a thing not to be done but in my best, my purest, and my happiest moments. Many of these I had, but then I had not my pen and ink [and] my paper before me, my conveniences, 'my appliances and means to boot'; all which, the moment that I thought of them, seemed to disturb and impair the sanctity of my pleasure. I contented myself with thinking over my complacent feelings, and breathing forth solitary gratulations and thanksgivings, which I did in many a sweet and many a wild place, during my late Tour. In this shape, procrastination became irresistible to me; at last I said, I will write at home from my own fireside, when I shall be at ease and in comfort. I have now been more than a fortnight at home, but the uneasiness in my chest has made me beat off the time when the pen was to be taken up. I do not know from what cause it is, but during the last three years I have never had a pen in my hand for five minutes, before my whole frame

becomes one bundle of uneasiness; a perspiration starts out all over me, and my chest is oppressed in a manner which I cannot describe. This is a sad weakness; for I am sure, though it is chiefly owing to the state of my body, that by exertion of mind I might in part control it. So, however, it is; and I mention it, because I am sure when you are made acquainted with the circumstances, though the extent to which it exists nobody can well conceive, you will look leniently upon my silence, and rather pity than blame me; though I must still continue to reproach myself, as I have done bitterly every day for these last eight weeks. One thing in particular has given me great uneasiness: it is, lest in the extreme delicacy of your mind, which is well known to me, you for a moment may have been perplexed by a single apprehension that there might be any error, anything which I might misconceive, in your kindness to me. When I think of the possibility of this, I am vexed beyond measure that I had not resolution to write immediately. But I hope that these fears are all groundless, and that you have (as I know your nature will lead you to do) suspended your judgment upon my silence, blaming me indeed but in that qualified way in which a good man blames what he believes will be found an act of venial infirmity, when it is fully explained. But I have troubled you far too much with this. Such I am however, and deeply I regret that I am such. I shall conclude with solemnly assuring you, late as it is, that nothing can wear out of my heart, as long as my faculties remain, the deep feeling which I have of your delicate and noble conduct towards me.

It is now high time to speak of the estate, and what is to be done with it. It is a most delightful situation, and few things would give me greater pleasure than to realise the plan which you had in view for me, of building a house there. But I am afraid, I am sorry to say, that the chances are very much against this, partly on account of the state of my own affairs, and still more from the improbability of Mr. Coleridge's continuing in the country. The writings are at present in my possession, and what I should wish is, that I might be considered at present as steward of the land, with liberty to lay out the rent in planting, or any other improvement which might be thought advisable, with a

view to building upon it. And if it should be out of my power to pitch my own tent there, I would then request that you would give me leave to restore the property to your own hands, in order that you might have the opportunity of again presenting it to some worthy person who might be so fortunate as to be able to make that pleasant use of it which it was your wish that I should have done.

Mr. Coleridge informed me, that immediately after you left Keswick, he had, as I requested, returned you thanks for those two elegant drawings which you were so good as to leave for me. The present is valuable in itself, and I consider it as a high honour conferred on me. How often did we wish for five minutes' command of your pencil while we were in Scotland! or rather that you had been with us. Sometimes I am sure you would have been highly delighted. In one thing Scotland is superior to every country I have travelled in; I mean the graceful beauty of the dresses and figures. There is a tone of imagination about them beyond anything I have seen elsewhere.

Mr. Coleridge, I understand, has written to you several times lately; so of course he will have told you when and why he left us. I am glad he did, as I am sure the solitary part of his tour did him much the most service. He is still unwell, though wonderfully strong. He is attempting to bring on a fit of the gout, which he is sure will relieve him greatly. I was at Keswick last Sunday and saw both him and Mr. Southey, whom I liked very much. Coleridge looks better, I think, than when you saw him; and is, I also think, upon the whole, much better. Lady Beaumont will be pleased to hear that our carriage (though it did not suit Mr. Coleridge, the noise of it being particularly unpleasant to him) answered wonderfully well for my sister and me, and that the whole tour far surpassed our most sanguine expectations.

They are sadly remiss at Keswick in putting themselves to trouble in defence of the country; they came forward very cheerfully some time ago, but were so thwarted by the orders and counter-orders of the ministry and their servants, that they have thrown up the whole in disgust. At Grasmere, we have turned out almost to a man. We are to go to Ambleside on Sunday to be mustered, and put on, for the first time, our military apparel.

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I remain, dear Sir George, with the most affectionate and respectful regard for you and Lady Beaumont,

Yours sincerely,
W. Wordsworth.

My sister will transcribe three sonnets,¹ which I do not send you from any notion I have of their merit, but merely because they are the only verses I have written since I had the pleasure of seeing you and Lady Beaumont. At the sight of Kilchurn Castle, an ancient residence of the Breadalbanes, upon an island in Loch Awe, I felt a real poetical impulse: but I did not proceed. I began a poem (apostrophising the castle) thus:

Child of loud-throated war! the mountain stream
Roars in thy hearing; but thy hour of rest
Is come, and thou art silent in thine age:

but I stopp'd.

MS. 152. W. W. to Walter Scott²
Lockhart(—) K(—)

Grasmere near Keswick Cumberland. Oct. 16th, 1803.

My dear Sir,

I am a wretched Sinner in Letter writing, and have taken off the whole grace from the present letter by my procrastination.—A petty alteration which I wished to make in the sonnet prevented me from writing immediately on our arrival, and the first step being made in transgression the rest followed of course. We had a delightful journey home, delightful weather, and a sweet country to travel through. We reached our little cottage in high spirits and thankful to God for all his bounties. My Wife and Child were both well; and, as I need not say, we had all of us a happy meeting. We past Braxholme, your Braxholme we supposed, about four miles on this side of Hawick, it looks

¹ i.e. Degenerate Douglas, &c. (as in next letter). 'Vanguard of Liberty', and 'Shout, for a mighty victory is won' (Oxf. W., pp. 292, 309, 310). After the Sonnets W. adds, 'if you think, either you or Lady Beaumont, that these last two Sonnets are worth publication, would you have the goodness to circulate them in any way you like?'

² W. and D. had made Scott's acquaintance when on their Scotch tour in the previous September.

better in your Poem than in its present realities; the situation however is delightful, and makes amends for an ordinary mansion. The whole of the Teviot, and the pastoral steep about Moss-paul,¹ pleased us exceedingly. The Esk below Langholm is a delicious River, and we saw it to great advantage. We did not omit noticing Johnnie Armstrong's Keep, but his hanging-place we miss'd to our great regret. We were indeed most truly sorry that we could not have you along with us into Westmoreland. The country was in its full glory, the verdure of the valleys, in which we are so much superior to you in Scotland, was but little tarnished by the season, and the trees putting on their most beautiful looks. My Sister was quite enchanted, and we often said to each other, 'What a pity Mr. Scott is not with us!' I had the pleasure of seeing Coleridge and Southey at Keswick last Sunday. Southey, whom I never saw much of before, I liked much better than I expected; he is very pleasant in his manners, and a man of great reading, in old books, poetry, Chronicles, memoirs, etc., particularly Spanish and Portuguese. By the bye, he occasionally reviews and he has at present, among other things, a Poem to review of that very Tytler who made his illiberal attack upon him and Coleridge in the Edinburgh Magazine which I showed you at Liswaide,² so no mercy for poor Tytler. He has also to review a Vol. of Poems by a somebody Bayley³ Esqr which contains a long dull Poem in ridicule of the Idiot Boy, and in which Squire Bayley has mentioned by name 'Mr Wordsworth that most simple of all simple Poets', so no mercy for Squire Bayley. But enough of this nonsense. My sister and I often talk of the happy days we spent in your Com-

¹ Between Hawick and Langholm.

² Liswaide: as spelt by W.

³ *Poems* by Peter Bayley, Jun. Esq., London, 1803. The poem here referred to is *The Fisherman's Wife*, dedicated to all admirers of the familiar style of tale writing, so popular in 1800. In that poem occurs the stanza:

Mother, dear Mother, cease to weep!
My father will return anon.
At eve he'll come: beyond the lake
He waits secure, or else to take
His fish to market he is gone.

A note is appended: 'The simplicity of that most simple of all poets, Mr. W. himself, is scarcely more simple than the language of this stanza. *Abest invidia dictu.*

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pany, such things do not occur often in life. If we live, we shall meet again, that is my consolation when I think of these things. Do write to me and promise you will come and see us here, and bring Mrs Scott if you can. At all events we shall look for you certainly. Scotland and England sound like division, do what we can, but we really are but neighbours; if you were no farther off and in Yorkshire, we should think so. Farewell. My sister joins with me in best remembrances to you and Mrs Scott. God prosper you, and all that belongs to you. Your sincere Friend, for such I will call myself, though slow to use a word of such solemn meaning to any one,

W. Wordsworth.

Poor Coleridge was prevented by ill-health from walking over to Liswaide.

Address: Walter Scott Esqr., North Castle Street, Edinburgh
(*readdressed to Laswade*).

At the end of the letter D. W. has copied the Sonnet 'Degenerate Douglas' (as Oxf. W., p. 292, except for the first two lines which run:

Now as I live I pity that great Lord
Whom pure despite etc.).

MS. 153. D. W. and W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 16th October [1803]

(*D. writes*)

My dear Brother,

William is going to write to you upon this sheet of paper but he is now writing to Cooke, so in the mean time I will take up the pen. You will be glad to hear that we are both much better for our Tour into Scotland, we spent our time very pleasantly, saw a great deal and returned in excellent health. To be sure it was rather expensive but what matter? We travelled as frugally as ever we could, and we shall have something pleasant to remember as long as we live. Mary and the Babe were both well during the whole time of our absence, Joanna Hutchinson was with them and has not left us yet. I *must* tell you that your

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Godson is as fine a Lad as ever was born, not a great *Beauty* but a noble looking creature—he has a very fine countenance and is wonderfully strong and active. I often wish that you and all my Brothers could see him; you must not put off your journey into the North for another Summer—we fully expect to see you before the end of the next.

William now desires me to transcribe a part of a Letter which he has just received from Cooke which you will be so good as to read.

[*Letter from Cooke follows, asking for a loan on good security.*]

(*W. writes*)

Dear Rich^d

The above is part of a Letter which I have just received from Cooke. I have written to him in answer and told him that of course it would give me great pleasure to let him have any money which I could command, provided you to whom I entirely submitted myself on this occasion approved of the security and provided the lending my share of this money and Dorothy's did not interfere with any plan which you had formed for the disposing of it.—I have therefore to beg that you would use your unbiassed judgment on this occasion, not suffering any friendship between Cooke and me to interfere any further in the business, than to insure him a preference to any other Borrower, his security being unexceptionable, and other things being equal, by which I chiefly mean, your having no other plan of temporarily disposing of the money till our affairs may be finally settled.

I have a friendship for Cooke and have been obliged by him for the loan of sixty pounds, which sum I should now request you to repay him on my account if convenient, did I not hope to make the debt a means of spurring up Montagu to pay the 60£ arrears. As I have said before, use no ceremony in this business, but do whatever you think most for our joint interest.

I am in tolerable health, Dorothy much better for her late excursion, and believe me my dear Rich^d your most affectionate B^r

W. Wordsworth

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq., No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 154. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson
K(—)

Sunday Nov. 13th [1803]

My dear Friend

The sight of a letter from you always makes my heart beat [?], when I opened out your last I was more than usually anxious and fearful. As soon as Molly had lodged it in my hands I said 'it is from Mrs Clarkson' and we all made a dead stand before I had the courage to open it. We had heard of your having been ill again and though I felt almost sure that you would not have written if you had not been better, yet I was afraid to look into the terrible history of what you had endured. When I had scanned the letter over, and seen that you were at least not in miserably bad spirits, I read it aloud. My dear Friend we do indeed most deeply sympathise with you in your sufferings, as well as your hopes and pleasures, and we offer up our wishes and prayers for your perfect recovery with earnest hearts. It is indeed very melancholy that you should have been thrown back again, but the wonderful power that there is in your frame to restore itself has made us never hopeless about you. We are exceedingly glad that you are going to Bristol, at any rate you will have a milder winter than at Bury, and surely Dr Beddoes,¹ when he sees you and hears from yourself the history of your sufferings, your uprisings, and falling back, will be able to ascertain the course of your disease. It will be a fortnight tomorrow since your letter was begun, you were to be at Bristol in ten days, so I hope you are there now. The journey if your companions were pleasant would be of service to you, and at Bristol you will be among some of the kindest of your old Ulswater friends. Rocks and trees and steep Banks they will comfort your spirits though certainly the waters of the Avon do not resemble the clear stream of the Emont. I wish your sister had been with you (but that was impossible) or Miss Malling or any other kind

¹ Thomas Beddoes (1760–1808), after graduating in medicine at Oxford, and teaching chemistry there, went to Clifton, and with Watt and Wedgwood established the 'Pneumatic Institute' there in 1798, with Humphry Davy as his assistant. He was a man of wide interests, both political and scientific, and an eminent doctor. His death came as a severe blow to Coleridge who esteemed him highly and depended much on his advice.

female Friend. Before this time you will have heard that Tom Hutchinson has taken Mr Hazel's Farm, formerly occupied by Johnny Armstrong, that white house on the hill above Dalemmain that was first pointed out to me by you.—Who would ever have thought that Sara Hutchinson was so soon to be an inhabitant of that house? I trust that you and she will be neighbours next summer, if not in the winter too, and I do think that if anything would be likely to make the winter climate of the mountains endurable by your shivering body it would be the comfort of such a friend and neighbour. We often say to each other how delightful it will be for Sara and you to be so near each other. I am sure when I first heard that they were coming I thought of your pleasure before our own. Joanna is quite recovered. She is now at Mrs Addison's and I believe, will scarcely go to her Brother George's before the Spring so we shall most likely see her again before she leaves the country. She is a good hearted girl with a large share of the Hutchinson generosity and disinterestedness about her. We had a long letter from poor Coleridge written in the languor of the first moments of ease after suffering the various tortures of tooth-ache, *teeth* drawing, rheumatism, sickness, pains in the Bowels, Diarrhoea and worst of all a shortness of breath which has recently attacked him on the return of damp weather. His spirits and strength are yet wonderful; ill as he was on Friday I should not wonder, if the weather were fine, should he walk over to Grasmere before Wednesday; he has intended coming for some time past but has been prevented by one ugly attack or another. The Christening of C's children took place last Tuesday, I had been very unwell a short time before, so William and Mary were afraid of trusting me amongst so much company, so I was obliged to request that they should find a proxy for me. William intended going but unfortunately was so ill on that day that he could not possibly attend. Derwent, who you know Coleridge used always to say was my favourite, is our Godson. A Pig from Eusemere (I suppose one of the offspring of *your* little sow) was one of the principal dishes. We have been expecting every day for at least these ten days past, to hear from or see your husband. I should be sorry to keep him a single hour from you, yet I should like that he went fresh from

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us and our little darling to you, that he might make a lively report of the improvements in the child and of the health, good or ill looks and other goings on of the family. William was frightened when he saw me with this long sheet of paper and called out that I was not to say a great deal about John for it would be quite tiresome—indeed my dear Friend I have no such fears, (nor do I believe that *he* had in his heart). I feel deeply every hour of my life the riches of the Blessings which God has given us, and you who have nursed your own Babe by a cottage fire-side know what peace and pleasure, wakefulness and hope there is in attending upon a healthy infant, and that ones thoughts are never tired when so employed—how often do we wish that you could see him! Many a time have we told him how you will love him. He has had a bad cold which confined him to the house for a fortnight, but we were never alarmed about him, for he did not lose his good looks till the cold was almost gone. He is sometimes tormented with pains in his gums, and has had some restless nights in consequence of this; but we cannot say that he has ever suffered very much, and we hope that some of his teeth will very soon be cut through. He takes no food but from his Mother's breast, except what he sucks out of a piece of meat or a crust of Bread while we are at our meals. He is generally so quiet at these times that it is quite a treat to have him at table with us, and being generally as we are without company we do not give him up to Molly! We are going to get him a tall chair that he may sit up at table by himself, for in a little while it will not be very convenient to eat with him upon our knees, he stretches out so for every thing. I do not think it will be possible for you to be disappointed with the Child when you see him if he goes on flourishing as he has hitherto done, yet he is not a beautiful child, he is far more of a handsome one and yet he sometimes looks both beautiful and handsome. He has a noble countenance, if I were not afraid of making even you laugh at me I should say he looks as if he was not the child of ordinary parents. I am sure he is very sensible, he has all faculties, of which we can at present judge, in perfection. He *has a gentle silent smile for every Body that looks at him, and often laughs very loud at us when we play with him, yet his*

looks are frequently very grave and thoughtful, he likes dearly to be laid upon his Back on the floor, kicking and sprawling like a Merry Andrew such as they make for children and hang against the wall with strings to pull up their legs with a jerk. We bathe him every morning—he sobs bitterly but never cries, yet in dressing after it he sometimes screams lustily and is in a violent passion. I believe Sara Coleridge was never in a passion in her life, she is the very soul of meekness, it is quite a wonder to hear her cry when she is well, but poor thing! she has been exceedingly ill as have all C's children and all the children at Keswick, and it has made her fretful, but still in the same meek way. John is now sending through the house one of his angry squalls, I daresay his gums are not very easy and his Mother is undressing him. They have company in the parlour below, little Hannah Lewthwaite who is come to *nurse* him. She is the h[appiest?] lass in all Grasmere if she may but be allowed to have John in her [arms] and like all poor people's little girls she is a very noteable nurse. [We] ask her to come about once a month and she always takes care to be an early visitor. It is very affecting to us to see how much John is beloved in the neighbourhood. Peggy Ashburner dotes on him as if she were his Grandmother (she was the person who first dressed him) and Molly Ashburner and Sally are never more happy than when John smiles on them. Since dinner Hannah Lewthwaite, the Babe and I took a walk together, it was bitter cold snow on the hills and a keen wind, he was wrapped up in flannels and no cold touched his Body. You cannot conceive how he was delighted with the wind against his face, and whenever he cast his eyes upon little Hannah who walked beside us he laughed and *talked* to her *in his way*. By the Bye his eyes are not fine ones, they are small, but that you know makes him more like his Father, and they have frequently the very same expression as his Father's, that same mild light when he smiles. We have been obliged to cut off all his bonny hair, all but a little bit upon his forehead and put him on a cap, his hair grew so thin behind with rubbing against our breasts that we thought it would at last all come off. He is not a hundredth part so impressive in his looks with a cap on as without, it hides the noblest part of him, his head and forehead, and if we never

saw him but with it on we should almost forget the likeness to his father, but the moment it is taken off he astonishes us he is so like—Yet everybody does not see it. He is very fat and has a lovely neck and very strong arms—I do not think his legs will be uncommonly well formed though they are strong—I recollect your Tom's, I do not think they will ever be shaped like his. 6 or 8 weeks ago he cried when he was given to strangers, or when they looked much at him, but now he never cries. Indeed I think if it were possible to tire you with a long story of him you will be tired now. But oh! that you could see him! I am sure you would not soon be tired with quietly watching him, and it would do you good soul and Body. His dear Mother is very well, she makes the best nurse in England. Old Molly is well, she has put on her gown this afternoon to nurse John, it is her Sunday afternoon's treat to sit in the parlour below stairs and nurse, poor creature! She told him, (for she always talks to him whenever we will let her) several times in the week that she would dress herself for him on Sunday. So that he has a young nurse and an old one. The vale and mountains of Grasmere have been in the fullest pride of their Beauty this autumn. The fern has been more luxuriant than John Fisher, an old inhabitant of Grasmere, ever knew it, and *we* never saw it half so fine; besides the colour of it has been more gorgeous than ever, owing I suppose to the gentleness of the autumn. Winter is now settled with us yet the fern still retains some of its glorious orange hue. William and I had a fine walk this morning round the lake. It was a cold morning, but the mountains and lakes were in great Beauty, all alive with sunshine and shadows. I can say but little in praise of our garden and orchard. They are not yet put into winter trim, all the leaves are about encumbering the paths, and the sticks uncleared away. Molly is to do all the week after next. Next week we have our grand wash. We hire a woman for two or three days every 5 weeks. We have our own ale now and it is of great use to Mary and me. I hope Mr Clarkson will commend it when he comes. We have got a little cat who I hope will be a pleasant companion for Johnny—they already play together. We are almost over-run with Rats so were forced to get a cat and I should now think that the house could scarcely have

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been right without one, if it were not for the Birds in the orchard. What a great fellow Tom will be when we see him again! I am very glad he takes so nicely to his learning. May God bless him and preserve the Mother and Son to be a comfort to each other. Give Mary's very best love to him with mine and tell him that we are always very happy to hear he is a good Boy and a good Scholar. Poor fellow, it is a pity he could not have gone with you. I wish this letter had been at Bristol before you, but that was impossible, we did not get yours till Friday. Let us hear from you whenever you can. Short letters. I should have written to you again before your last, but I have often been ill in my stomach which makes William unwilling that I should begin to write, but I am well now and I hope I shall [*seal*]. May God bless you my very dear [*seal*]. I shall always Love you.

Dorothy Wordsworth.

William has not yet done anything of importance at his great work, he is very well and looks better than for some time past. His Tour did him good. By the Bye I am writing not a journal, for we took no notes, but *recollections* of our Tour in the form of a journal, you will be amused with it for our sakes, but I think journals of Tours except as far as one is interested in the travellers are very uninteresting things. Wretched, wretched writing! I can hardly read it myself—God bless you my dear dear Friend.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, Revd. Samuel Lowell's, Bristol.

MS. 155. D. W. to S. T. Coleridge

[Dec.¹ 1803]

My dear Friend,

Johnny has got a cold and Mary and I despair of getting rid of ours till the severity of the weather abates, otherwise we are all well.—We received no note or parcel on Tuesday, it is a grievous thing, but the carriers are such bad managers and have so much to do that we cannot depend on them for any thing.

¹ Date proved by reference to Peggy (*v. next Letter*).

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We must never more send money in the *parcels*, if it be absolutely necessary to send it, it should be given to Fletcher himself. We gather from your letter this morning what were the contents of the last. As to the money William bids me say that whatever best accommodates you he should best like, only that it would be more pleasant to us (other things being nearly equal) to have nothing to pay till the end of next summer as John will then be at home, and our affairs settled. As to Mr Bayley,¹ we heartily wish you had the job off your hands, and pray that you may not be a thousandth part as tired as we have been in our small share of it. Do not on any account William says omit to speak of the plagiarisms from other Poets; Akenside, Cowper, Bowles etc. etc. This will interest them in the cause.—When are we to meet again? My dear Friend I am afraid this very very cold [weather] will disagree with you. Will Mrs Coleridge consent that Derwent should come? My kind love to her. She mentions the Salt of Lemon in her note, pray tell her it was not in the parcel with the shirt etc, Kiss Derwent and Sara for me and give my kind Love to Hartley. God bless you my dearest Coleridge! yours evermore Dorothy Wordsworth.

Pray pay the postage of the enclosed letter to Peggy.
Friday evening.

[*On the same sheet of paper are quotations from 'Anct. Mar.' showing plagiarisms from that poem in 'Forest Fay' (24th stanza), and adding 'there are several unnoticed verbal thefts such as "fiendish faces" from the Mad Mother, "The very breath suspended" from the Wye. The plagiarisms in spirit are endless, and cannot be exhibited by quotations, but a person well-read in the L. B. will meet them every where. I cannot help adding, however, that the metre of this poem is taken from the Forsaken Indian Woman in L. B., a thing not worth noticing were it not that even so slight a circumstance would have prevented a man of any delicacy from abusing a person to whom he was indebted, even for such a trifle.'*]

¹ v. Letter 152.

MS. 156. D. W. and W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 12th December 1803.

(D. writes)

My dear Brother,

I have been for some time in expectation that we should hear from you, or I should have written to you before to request you to be so good as to tell me how the affair of Lord Lowther's money stands at present, whether I shall be entitled to any Interest for the money last paid in the course of a short time, or if there was anything left from John's sales (which you spoke of) so that I could have a trifle on that account.

Be so kind as to discharge a draft of 10 pounds which I shall be obliged to make on you in the course of next week. I shall draw it payable (one month after Date) to Mr Simpson or order. I shall also be obliged to you if you will endeavour to procure a Frank as soon as you can, and enclose in it a one pound note, the Frank to be directed to Mrs Marsh at Mr James Marsh's, Blacksmith, Lyme, Dorsetshire.—The person was our servant at Racedown, she was a very good creature and much attached to us, and has now a large family and is very poor. You will just put one line in the Letter saying that you sent the Note at my request. I have told her that it should be sent, and she will write to me to acknowledge the receipt of it.

I hope to hear that you bear this severe weather well, but indeed you are so subject to bad colds that I am afraid you will hardly escape one now. We have all had very bad colds from the eldest to the youngest. John has been the worst of all, but he thrives wonderfully, notwithstanding. I wish heartily you could see him—he is as fine a Lad as ever was born. God bless you, believe me, my dear Br.

Your ever affectionate Sister,

Dorothy Wordsworth—

Pray write as soon as you can—

(W. writes)

My dear Brother,

I have just received an application for a debt of £10.15.3½ from my College Tutor for my expenses at the University. I

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knew that there was some claim existing against me of this kind. The Tutors are settling their accounts—I wish it to be paid, as indeed it ought to have been many years ago. If you could remit the money to Mr Wood according to the directions I shall give below I should be much obliged to you.

Dorothy upon the whole is in much better health than she used to be in about this time last year; though we have all bad colds. I wish you could see your Nephew and Godson; he is indeed a noble Child. I am enrolled among the Grasmere Volunteers, but have not yet been called upon to attend the exercise.—Farewell, your very affectionate Br

W. Wordsworth.

By the bye, I ought to have mentioned to you that Sir George Beaumont made me a present last summer of a few old houses with two small fields attached to them in the Vale of Keswick, value £100, it was for me to patch up a house there if I liked to be near Mr Coleridge. But this I decline, though he insists on my keeping the land, so you see I am a freeholder of the County of Cumberland. Farewell.

Direct the Money to the Revd James Wood, St. John's, Cambridge, or be so good as to write to him to inform him where he may have it paid.

Address: Rich^d Wordsworth Esq^{re}, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. *157. W. W. to Francis Wrangham*
K.

[Early in 1804.]

My dear Wrangham,

It is something less than ten minutes since I received your Pacquet of songs and kind admonishment accompanying them, for both of which receive my best thanks. I have indeed behaved very uncourteously to you, I will not say unkindly because that would be unjust, inasmuch as my own apparent neglect of you has called out more kind feelings towards you than I ever could have had, if I had done my duty. You do not know what a task it is to me to write a Letter; I absolutely loathe the sight of a Pen, when I am to use it. I have not written three Letters,

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except upon indispensable business, during the last three years. I should not mention a circumstance so discreditable to me, were it not to justify myself from any apprehension on your part that I may have slighted you. It is not in my Nature to neglect old Friends. I live too much in the past for anything of that kind to attach to me.—You wrote me a very friendly and pleasant letter long since, with a copy of verses which were very amusing; for both of these, if thanks late be better than thanks never at all, I now make you my acknowledgments.—I have hurried through your songs which I think admirably adapted for the intended purpose. ‘A song or a story may drive away care,’ etc., pleased me best, but I shall be able to judge better upon a more leisurely perusal. You enquire how I am and what doing. As to the first I am tolerably well, and for the second, I have great things in meditation, but as yet I have only been doing little ones. At present I am engaged in a Poem on my own earlier life, which will take five parts or books to complete, three of which are nearly finished. My other meditated works are a Philosophical Poem, and a narrative one. These two will employ me some, I ought to say several, years, and I do not mean to appear before the world again as an Author, till one of them at least be finished.

As to my private affairs you would probably hear at Gallow Hill if you called there that I have a son; and a noble one too he is, as ever was seen. He is a great comfort and pleasure to us in this lonely place. My Sister continues to live with me. I read, walk, doze a little now and then in the afternoon, and live upon the whole what you may call a tolerably rational life, I mean as the world goes.

But should this letter grow in length, as it has grown in dullness, the Muses have mercy on you! but I will spare you! Farewell. Do not fail to present my kind remembrances to Mrs. Wrangham; and believe me, in spite of my remissness, and Letter-Phobia (forgive the uncouth wedlock of this compound), your very sincere and affectionate Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

P.S.—I shall send you on the other side 3 Sonnets,¹ the first

¹ The ‘3 Sonnets’ are *To the Men of Kent*, ‘Six thousand Veterans’, and

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and 3rd of which I believe have been printed, though I myself have never seen them in print. I sent them to Sir George Beaumont, who informed me that he would forward them to some of the newspapers. The two or three last lines in the last I have altered from the copy sent to Sir George; if you think it worth while to circulate them with your own Ballads and songs, or otherwise, you are perfectly at liberty so to do. They are however heavy-armed Troops, and might perhaps stand in the way of the movements of your flying artillery. I conjecture that you have more songs to follow, do not fail on any account to transmit them to me. Let me know also what you are doing, and how yourself and family are. I cannot promise to be a correspondent, I know my own infirmity too well. Therefore perhaps you may think this a request, little less than impudent, viz., that you should write to me upon such terms. Poor Coleridge who has been in very miserable health is now in London, whither he is gone with a view of trying to arrange matters for a voyage to Madeira for benefit of Climate. Farewell, and all happiness attend you.

W. W.

My Wife and Sister send their best respects to you and Mrs. Wrangham.

MS. 158. *D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*

January 15th 1804.

My dear Friend,

I received your last letter the day before Coleridge came to us with Derwent intending to spend a few days only here, and proceed to Devonshire either by Bristol or London. Day after day he was detained by sickness, or bad weather, or both, (for when the weather was damp or wet he never failed to be very ill) and yesterday he left us in indifferent health, though on a fine sunny morning. He remained undetermined for a long time by which road he should go, and I had always a strong hope that

Anticipation. The text, save for slight differences in punctuation, is that of 1807, except that l. 12 of *Anticipation* reads:

And prospect of our Brethren to be slain.

he would see you at Bristol, but he intends to stay a short time in London before he goes into Devonshire, and on his Road to London he will stop a few days at Liverpool. It was the uncertainty about poor Coleridge which has made me thus long in writing to you. My dear Friend! I cannot tell you how much you have been in our thoughts and how earnestly and anxiously we have wished for better news of you. Yet I know not how, though your last letter was so very melancholy and discouraging (I mean melancholy as to the state of your health for it was full of dear life-giving chearful thoughts) I always ever since it arrived have hoped with confidence that you were yet doing well and my hopes gained strength from our not hearing anything from Mr Clarkson. They are now entirely settled and confirmed by the chearful accounts which we have received from Sara Hutchinson. Yes, my kind good Friend we will only talk of your coming again to spend your days amongst us in your own house at Ullswater which, where ever you go must always be your home of homes. I can well conceive how you hunger after it till your very heart is sick, when you look at the drawings which Mr C carried with him. Indeed I was grateful to Mr Green when I heard of the pleasure he had given you; the manner of presenting them to your Husband was exceedingly pleasing and I loved or at least very much *liked* the man the moment I heard of it.

We are all well, our darling Baby sweeter than ever. His countenance opens and improves daily, his eyes grow more pleasing, from the light which is always in them when he smiles, and he has when he looks grave an exceedingly mild and contemplative face. Indeed we ought to bless God for having given us so fine a child—he is perfectly healthy except that he is apt to have a little cough, or rather to catch cold frequently. He has cut one tooth, with but little trouble compared with what many children have, and is on the point of cutting another. We walk out with him whenever the weather is tolerable and a great weight he is, but yet it is no difficult thing to us to carry him. He is very strong in his limbs and can turn himself over in bed or on the floor and almost raise himself up, but his legs are not straight, they are much more crooked than Sara Coleridge's were

at his age. We have been told this is a sign of strength, which I do not much believe, but I daresay they will be as bonny as any child's legs when he is a little older. He is very fond of standing upon them—but we avoid letting him feel the weight of his Body as much as possible, when he does stand or touch our knees with them, and are cautious to avoid nursing him in that way. He is to be inoculated for the cow-pox tomorrow. Derwent is still with us and very sorry we shall be to part with him, but we must send him by the first opportunity as he has now been nearly a month absent from his Mother. He is sweet-tempered and very affectionate, fond of hanging about one's knees telling stories, repeating little songs etc. etc. We have one very favourite story about going to Ulswater, Parkhouse and Tommy Clarkson. He is as fat as ever but he is not a healthy child, has weak Bowels and is subject to fevers and seems to be in constitution very like his father only without his radical strength. Dear little creature, after every meal he complains that 'his Belly is full'. But I must tell you about Coleridge—he walked to Kendal yesterday. William accompanied him almost to Troutbeck, and C was not tired when [he] parted from him, but two or three days before [he] was lame with Gout, stomach-sick, haunted by ugly dreams, screamed out in the night, durst not sleep etc etc.—he still thinks nothing but a warmer climate *can* restore him to health. I have told you that he was the cause of my not writing—the uncertainty in which we were respecting him, that alone perhaps would not have prevented me but I had so much uneasiness about him and *so much to do* that I seemed to have scarcely the quiet and leisure necessary to make me feel fit to write a letter that would give you any comfort. Mary had a very bad cold most of the time, which weakened her and made her unable to take an equal share with me in the business of the house—Molly was poorly, Coleridge continually wanting coffee, broth or something or other—the bed was moved into the sitting room night and morning, and with Derwent and the liveliest of Johnny's you may think we were busy enough in our small house.

We have given over even thinking of Invasion though our Grasmere Volunteers do walk past the door twice a week in their Red Coats to be exercised at Ambleside. Ordinary news we have

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none except that Miss Sympson is married to the son of Ibbetson the painter who is little more than half her age. Her poor Mother knew nothing about it till it was over, and was greatly distressed for the Lad has nothing. She was consoled, however in part by her Daughter's assurance that she would never leave her. Miss S. is a very sensible woman, but she certainly seems to have done a very foolish thing, and I am truly sorry for her. Mary is just come into the room with the Baby asleep. I have looked at him and blessed him in your name—I often give him a kiss for you. I trust you will give him a thousand yourself before next summer is over. We all join in kindest love to you both. How does Tom do without you? He will be quite a great Lad when we see him again. Do let us hear from you as soon as you can. Tell us what Dr Beddoes thinks of you, what medicines you take, if you often see him, in short all that you can about your health not minding anything else. Bless you again and again, I have a wretched pen, excuse this wr[etched] writing. Believe me ever more your faithful Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

The first letter I have written in this New Year.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, Nelson House, Dowry Parade, Hot Wells, Bristol.

ms. 159. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere, February 10th 1804

My dear Brother,

I write to inform you that William will be under the necessity of drawing upon you for £20 in the course of a fortnight at one month after Date payable to Mr John Green or Order, and that to-day (he being absent) I have drawn upon you for £20 payable to Mr Michael Dawson or Order—one Month after Date. We hope we shall not have occasion to trouble you for more than £20 further before July. This is the time when we pay our Bills.

We are all well. John as thriving as ever. I was greatly shocked the other day to hear that one of my Uncle Cookson's little Girls was dead—I trust it was not Mary, if it had been Mary the

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person would not have said one of his *little* Girls.¹ It is a long time since I heard from Forncett. I have written to my Aunt and hope I shall soon hear something about the manner of the Child's Death, and of the rest of the Family. John has been inoculated twice for the cow pox but has not taken it.

William bids me tell you that he has not the most distant thoughts of building at Applethwaite (Sir George Beaumont's Estate) nor indeed any where else, but would be glad to get a ready built house *cheap*, with a little Land.

I hope you are well and that you will not let anything induce you to give up the idea of coming to see us next Summer. William is sitting beside me, he says 'Mind you tell Richard that you are in much better health than for some time past'. It is true indeed I am far stronger, and fatter, and in every respect more healthy than I was. I think nursing agrees with me. I [?take] John about a great deal in the open air and am not often tired with him.

Poor Henry Airey of Newcastle is lost off the Coast of Norway, himself, his ship, and all his Crew!—He was the hope of the family. We long for news of John. God bless you my dear Richard.

Believe me ever your affect^d Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Richard Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. *160. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*
K(—)

February 13th 1804.

My dear Friend,

We have expected to hear from you every post since it was possible that my last should have reached you; and thinking that surely if you were not going on well your husband would have written to us I put off writing a second time; but we have waited now so long that I can wait no longer, for sometimes I am exceedingly uneasy and anxious about you notwithstanding my confidence that Mr C would tell us how you were, if you were unable yourself. We have had a most mild winter. The heart of

¹ It was not Mary, but Anna. She had died on Jan. 1.

it (December and January) has been perfect South of England February and Spring, but these two days have been intensely cold, and indeed the mild weather was interrupted by chance days of mountain frosts and winds, that made the snow-drops hang their heads. The gardens are gay with Spring flowers and many primroses have been found wild in the hedges. The grass in many parts of the vale is of a refreshing green. We are all well. William, which is the best news I can tell you, is cheerfully engaged in composition, and goes on with great rapidity. He is writing the poem on his own early life which is to be an appendix to the Recluse. He walks out every morning, generally alone, and brings us in a large treat almost every time he goes. The weather with all its pleasant mildness has been very wet in general—he takes out the umbrella and I daresay stands stock-still under it during many a rainy half-hour in the middle of road or field. Some chance time Mary and I have walked with him, but we always make a point of taking John out at all times when it is possible, which is almost exercise enough for us. Mary continues to suckle John and he continues to thrive to our heart's contentment. He has not taken the Cow-pox. We shall probably not inoculate him again (as we think the matter was not fresh enough) till we go to Park House in the Spring. In the beginning of April I shall most likely be there to help Sara to put her house in order, and a short time after when the weather is mild we shall all go together in the carriage, I returning home first. My dear Friend, how we long for you too, when we talk of this scheme! It will be very melancholy for us to see an empty house at Eusemere. John is very strong in his limbs but he is so stout a child that I do not think he will walk till after [he is one] year old. He looks very bonny with his [?]. He is grown a merry little fellow, but what is most interesting and remarkable about him is a certain placid dignity of countenance, a steadiness which usually melts away with the sweetest smiles in the world that spread over every corner of his face—they begin with his tongue and give his eyes a sweetness which if they were in themselves larger and finer eyes I think they would scarcely have, for it seems like a new gift whenever it comes into them, and yet his eyes are always very pretty. I wish you could see him play with

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his feet, he takes his great toe up to his eye a hundred times in a day. Derwent left us ten days ago. The little darling loves us all very much. I hope he may come again in summer. He was perfectly well for the last month before he left us, but the day after he got home he became very feverish and poorly. Sally Ashburner went with him and stayed a week. She says Sara is a sweet little girl, but that our Johnny is a great deal larger and heavier. Hartley was mad with joy when he saw Derwent again, but poor D was stupefied till he cast his eyes on Sara, when he directly called out 'Johnny Johnny'! He then began to find them all out—he always called John Johnny. Mrs C gave us a very affecting account of their meeting. Coleridge is in London—tolerably well. Mrs Southey is to be confined in April. The Southneys and Mrs Lovel are settled at Keswick. The two families are in the larger house. Do my good and dear Friend write immediately. I have not attempted to tell you how anxiously we expect your letter but we shall think of it very much till it comes. How is your dear Tom! God [*seal*] ever bless him! and you and his father, and may you have [*a hap*]py meeting together again—William's very kindest love.

Believe me ever my dear friend your affectionate and faithful
Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson, Nelson House, Dowry Parade, Hot Wells, Bristol.

MS. *161. D. W. to Samuel Ferguson*

February 22nd 1804 Grasmere.

My dear Sam,

A blooming maiden from one of the grey cottages under the highest of the mountains that enclose our vale is to carry this letter over the sea with her. She has never, I daresay, been twenty miles from home in her life of sixteen years so it is a great event to her and her neighbours and her poor old grandmother whose sole remaining child at home she is. Her sister is married and in America. I wish she had been going to New York or Philadelphia. I would have requested you or Mr. Griffith to see

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her, but I have written to Mr. G. and if you have an opportunity I wish you would request him to send the letter to you as it contains all the family news I can recollect. I should have written a long letter, far longer, both to you and him but I am not well at present, though I hope in a fair way to be so in a few days.

Our little cottage, though not quite so quiet as when you were here is alive and chearful, with the sound of our dear boy's voice, who is a sweet bonny fellow. His dear mother is very well and so is my Brother and my health is in general good and we are all very happy. We rejoiced in the birth of your son. May God bless him and make him a comfort to you and his mother! We have been much distressed by the sad details of the ravages made by the yellow fever at New York, but we trust that you and your family got into a place of safety.

I hardly venture to ask you to write I have been so slow about it myself, but if you would be so good and kind, I know nothing that would give us more pleasure than to hear of you from yourself. We very often talk of you and the days we passed together. Last summer I saw the ashes of the fire and the smoky stones which we had left after boiling our kettle upon the Island, but when I think of those things I always have a tender melancholy in calling to mind that gentle creature Mary Threlkeld.

Old Molly, who is still our sole servant though at present not so well fitted for her place as she was, often talks of you, especially when she lays the spoons¹ on the table, in which she 'glories' (to use her own word).

Give my love to your wife. I hope to see her before many years are passed. William desires to be most affectionately remembered to you. Mary wishes she had been at Grasmere when you were here and also sends her greetings.

God bless you, my dear Sam.

Believe me most faithfully and affectionately yours,
Dorothy Wordsworth.

I did not know of the young woman's going till today or I should have prepared a packet before.

¹ v. Letter 133.

162. *D. W., W. W., and M. W. to S. T. Coleridge*
MS.
K(—)

Tuesday Evening, 6th March, $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 o'clock, [1804]

(*D. writes*)

My dear Friend,

We have waited post after post in expectation of another letter from you—in so doing I feel that we have done wrong for I begin to write now as a duty, rather than a work of pleasure and sympathy. But why have you not written to us again? We learn from Sara Hutchinson that you have seen Dr. Beddoes, from which we conclude that you are returned to London, and, as she says nothing to the contrary, that you were tolerably well. We have had no note from Mrs C for several Carrier days, but she sent us word on Saturday that she had not heard from you. I am sorry you have left Dunmow, because the Beaumonts are so good and kind-hearted that I think you must there have had home feelings about you, something like being amongst us, and, surely you might at their house in the country, have more time to yourself, and more quiet for going on with your work (independent of the chance of better health) than in London. I wish you would stay there till you go to Sicily, if you can. We have transcribed all William's smaller poems for you, and have begun the Poem on his life and The Pedlar, but before we send them off we mean to take another copy for ourselves, for they are scattered about here and there in this book and in that, one Stanza on one leaf, another on another, which makes the transcribing more than twice the trouble, besides the comfort of having them all in one or two nice volumes. It will, I am sure, give William great pleasure to send some of his poems to Lady Beaumont, and we shall be most glad to copy them when the necessary business is over, indeed I do not know what I should *not* like to do for so amiable a woman, one who has been so tender and kind to you. My head aches and I am not overwell in my stomach so dearest Coleridge forgive me for sending you a short and meagre letter. Mary and I have been spending two hours this afternoon, among crowds of men, women, and children with the smell of gin, rum, Brandy, and tobacco, and endless din

all about us. Furthermore, I had a four hours' walk in the morning. In the afternoon we were at Borwick's sale. He is broken up, and the house is taken by the people of the Nag's Head of Wytheburn.

In the morning William and I had so much enjoyment that regrets forced themselves on us continually that you were not with us, at least had not seen the place where we were. Mary is to go to-morrow. William found it out by himself—it is a little slip of the river above Rydale, that makes the *famous* waterfalls, about two hundred yards in length, it is high up towards the mountains, where one would not have expected any trees to be, and down it tumbles among rocks and trees, trees of all shapes, elegant Birches and ancient oaks, that have grown as tall as the storms would let them, and are now decaying away, their naked Branches like shattered lances, or the whole tree like a thing hacked away and dismantled, as William says to impale malefactors upon. (On one of them was an old glead's¹ nest.) With these are green hollies and junipers, a little waterfall, endless, endless waterbreaks—now a rock starting forward, now an old tree, enough to look at for hours, and then the whole seen in a long prospect. It is a miniature of all that can be conceived of savage and grand about a river, with a great deal of the beautiful. William says that whatever Salvator might desire could there be found. He longed for Sir George Beaumont, but if it is not seen in winter it would be nothing. By the bye, I must write well and tell you that the Bridge builder was called Willy-good-Waller.² I forgot to add that it was a sort of wonder in rural architecture, having been built without lime, and without a frame.

Mary, though very thin, and not *very* strong, is on the whole well. I cannot say that she has been so constantly, but her appetite does not fail her though she does not always eat as much as I wish she could. We talk now and then about the weaning of Johnny, but it is a hard matter to resolve upon till it seems to

¹ glead: a kite.

² Willy-good-Waller: William Benson, one of a famous family of bridge builders who are recorded as living at Brimmer-head, Easedale, as early as 1611. A bridge in Far Easedale is still known as 'Willy-good-Waller's brig'. Willy was a master of the art of building a bridge without mortar, and there is a legend that his back was used for making the arch.

be *necessary* which it hardly seems as long as she is without any illness or even uncomfortable feeling and the Babe is flourishing and healthy. He is indeed as noble a creature as ever was beheld, the joy and comfort of us all and wherever he goes he is looked on with delight. 'What a stout fellow!' 'I never saw so large a child' we hear from all quarters. You will be delighted to hear, that he does not now, as W. in his tenderness to us was pleased to say 'take a weary deal of nursing'—he is far less trouble, (if trouble I *must* call it) than he was. He sleeps generally in the evenings, and is far more happy in the day-time (except when he is sleepy or hungry) when we leave him to himself upon the carpet with good store of playthings than he is upon our knees. Give him but a work-basket full of tape and thread and other *oddments*, and he riots among it like a little pussy-cat. He can sit upright on the carpet, and so we leave him—sometimes he gets a good bump upon his head and lustily he roars, but no matter, he cannot hurt himself seriously, so we are not afraid of him and he will soon learn to take care of himself. His countenance is very intelligent. Could you but see him look up at you when he is sitting upon the ground, it would fill your heart top-full of pleasure, then he *does* look *beautiful*, though I am far from being so blind as to think him a beautiful Child; he knows all the neighbours and will stay quietly in their arms for a short time if he does but feel that he is not quite abandoned by us. One thing I must tell you, that when Molly Ashburner walks out with him which she sometimes does on a Sunday, he is quite happy with her in our own garden and Orchard but the moment she goes into the Lane he cries. Mr Clarkson was with us this day fortnight. Poor Man! he spoke with his usual confidence about his wife's recovery, and he had had such chearful accounts after he left her from herself that we were bribed to hope too that she was surely getting well—but today we have had a melancholy letter from her, though not a despairing one. She had had another relapse, solitude, and having only a very foolish woman to attend upon her—besides the absence of Dr Beddoes—indeed it was very improper that she should have been left without some female friend. Pray tell us what Dr Beddoes says of her—we are very anxious to know. I am very happy to think that you have

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seen Dr B. for her sake, the pleasure of hearing about you will heave up her spirits at least for one day—she laments to me that Dr Beddoes would not see you on account of your being in Essex. I began to be very unwell the day Mr Clarkson came and so continued all that week. I began with sickness but this soon went off and was followed by a violent looseness that lasted 4 days and weakened me much, but I am now as strong as ever again. This I know because I can bear Johnny in my arms as if he were not heavier than when he was two months old. On Friday (it was a delightful day) Mary and I walked with him to Ambleside and back, carried him all the way ourselves, and the next day to Mr Symptons, so you may judge that we are not in bad health. Poor dear Sara has had another sore throat—happily but a slight one—and she is well. Farewell, my beloved Friend. William, who is sitting beside me reading *Hamlet*—(we are both at the little green round table by the fireside, the watch ticking above our heads. Mary is with the sleeping Baby below stairs, writing to Sara)—William exhorts me to give over writing; so farewell, my dearest Coleridge. May God bless you! and your faithful and affectionate Dorothy Wordsworth.

Kind love to the Lambs. I hope you have talked to Mary Lamb about my regard for her, and my *seeming* neglect in not writing to her.

William gets on rapidly with his poem. It is truly delightful, and makes us all happy. I am about to read Shakespeare through, and have read many of the plays; so you see I do not absolutely do nothing. This I tell you, because I know it will give you pleasure. The Journal is at a stand at present on account of the copying. Mr Simpson has got fresh matter and is going to inoculate John again.

(*W. writes*)

Dearest C,

We are very anxious to hear from you. My health is pretty good, Mary's also, but this last shock of Dorothy has rather alarmed; she had been uncommonly well before, it came on all at once; the first day sickness (she had been eating heartily of sausages, unusually heartily) and afterwards violent looseness,

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coming on the moment she took any refreshment, and pains in the Bowels, leaving her at last very thin and weak though she recovered as if by magic. Do get for us the best advice you can. I finished five or six days ago another Book of my Poem, amounting to 650 lines. And now I am positively arrived at the subject I spoke of in my last. When this next book is done, which I shall begin in two or three days' time, I shall consider the work as finished. Farewell. I am very anxious to have your notes for *The Recluse*. I cannot say how much importance I attach to this; if it should please God that I survive you, I should reproach myself forever in writing the work if I had neglected to procure this help.

(*M. writes*)

God in heaven bless you, my dear, dear Friend! I am just going to get ready to go with W. to see the beautiful scenery beyond Rydale. O, that you were here to accompany us! I have been forced to take the *roaring Bairn* up from the floor, and I again say, God bless you, with him upon my knee

M. W.

Address: Mr Coleridge, No. 16 Abingdon Street, Westminster.

MS. 163. *W. W. to Thomas De Quincey*

J(—) K(—)

Grasmere, March 6th, [1804.]

My dear Sir,

Your last amiable Letter ought to have received a far earlier answer: I have been indeed highly culpable in my procrastination. It arrived just before we set off on our Scotch Tour, and I am so sadly dilatory in matters of this kind, that, unless I reply to a letter immediately, I am apt to defer it till the thought becomes painful, taking the shape of a duty rather than a pleasure, and then Heaven knows when I may set myself to rights again, by doing what I ought to do.—While I am on this subject, I must however say what you will be sorry to hear that I have a kind of derangement in my stomach and digestive organs which makes writing painful to me, and indeed almost prevents me from holding correspondence with anybody: and this (I mean to say the unpleasant feelings which I have connected with the act of holding a Pen) has been the chief cause of my long silence.

Your last Letter gave me great pleasure; it was indeed a very amiable one; and I was highly gratified in the thought of being so endeared to you by the mere effect of my writings. I am afraid you may have been hurt at not hearing from me, and may have construed my silence into neglect or inattention; I mean in the ordinary sense of the word. I assure you this has by no means been the case; I have thought of you very often and with great interest, and wished to hear from you again, which I hope I should have done, had you not perhaps been apprehensive that your Letter might be an intrusion. I should have been very glad to hear from you; and another letter might have roused me to discharge sooner the duty which I had shoved aside.

We had a most delightful tour of six weeks in Scotland; our pleasure however was not a little dashed by the necessity under which Mr. Coleridge found himself of leaving us, at the end of something more than a fortnight, from ill health; and a dread of the rains (his complaint being Rheumatic), which then, after a long drought, appeared to be setting in. The weather however on the whole was excellent, and we were amply repaid for our pains.

As, most likely, you will make the Tour of the Highlands some time or other, do not fail to let me know, beforehand, and I will tell you what we thought most worth seeing, as far as we went. Our Tour, though most delightful, was very imperfect, being nothing more than what is commonly called the Short Tour, with considerable deviations. We lef[t] Loch Ness, the Fall of Foyers, etc., unvisited.

By this time I conclude you have taken up your abode at Oxford. I hope this Letter, though sent at random partly, will be forwarded, and that it will find you. I am anxious to hear how far you are satisfied with yourself at Oxford, and, above all, that you have not been seduced into unworthy pleasures or pursuits. The state of both the Universities is, I believe, much better than formerly in respect to the morals and manners of the students. I know that Cambridge is greatly improved since the time when I was there, which is about thirteen years ago. The manners of the young men were very frantic and dissolute at that time, and Oxford was no better, or worse. I need not say to you that there is no true dignity but in virtue and temperance, and,

let me add, chastity; and that the best safeguard of all these is the cultivation of pure pleasures, namely, those of the intellect and affections. I have much anxiety on this head from a sincere concern in your welfare, and the melancholy retrospect, which forces itself upon one, of the number of men of genius who have fallen beneath the evils that beset them. I do not mean to preach; I speak in simplicity and tender apprehension, as one lover of Nature and of Virtue speaking to another.—Do not on any account fail to tell me whether you are satisfied with yourself since your migration to Oxford; if not, do your duty to yourself immediately; love Nature and Books; seek these, and you will be happy; for virtuous friendship, and love, and knowledge of mankind must inevitably accompany these, all things thus ripening in their due season.—I am now writing a poem on my own earlier life; and have just finished that part in which I speak of my residence at the University; it would give me great pleasure to read this work to you at this time, as I am sure, from the interest you have taken in the L. B., that it would please you, and might also be of service to you. This Poem will not be published these many years, and never during my lifetime, till I have finished a larger and more important work to which it is tributary. Of this larger work I have written one Book and several scattered fragments: it is a moral and philosophical Poem; the subject whatever I find most interesting in Nature, Man, and Society, and most adapted to poetic illustration. To this work I mean to devote the prime of my life, and the chief force of my mind. I have also arranged the plan of a narrative Poem; and if I live to finish these three principal works I shall be content. That on my own life, the least important of the three, is better [than] half complete, viz., 4 books, amounting to about 2500 lines. They are all to be in blank verse.—I have taken the liberty of saying this much of my own concerns to you, not doubting that it would interest you. You have as yet have [*sic*] had little knowledge of me but as a Poet; but I hope, if we live, we shall be still more nearly united.¹

I cannot forbear mentioning to you the way in which a wretched creature of the name of Peter Bailey has lately treated

¹ *Torn MS. united written in later hand in pencil.*

the author of your favourite Book, the 'Lyrical Ballads.' After pillaging them in a style of Plagiarism, I believe unexampled in the history of modern Literature, the wretch has had the baseness to write a long poem in ridicule of them, chiefly of *The Idiot Boy*; and, not content with this, in a note annexed to the same poem, has spoken of me, *by name*, as the *simplest*, i.e. the most contemptible of all Poets. The complicated baseness of this (for the plagiarisms are absolutely by wholesale) grieved me to the heart for the sake of poor human Nature: that anybody could combine (as this man in some way or other must have done) an admiration and love of those poems, with moral feelings so detestable, hurt me beyond measure. If this Unhappy Creature's Volume should ever fall in your way, you will find the Plagiarisms chiefly in two Poems, one entitled *Evening in the Vale of Festiniog*, which is a wretched Parody throughout of *Tintern Abbey*, and the other *The Ivy Seat*, also *The Forest Fay*, and some others.¹

I must now conclude, not omitting however to say that Mr. Coleridge and my sister were much pleased with your kind remembrances of them, which my Sister begs me to return. Mr. C—— is at present in London, sorry I am to say, on account of the very bad health under which he labours. Believe me to be, Dear Sir, your very affectionate Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

P.S.—Do not fail to write to me as soon as you can find time.

Address: Thomas de Quincey Esq^r., St. John's Priory, Chester, to be forwarded. Readdressed to Bath, and then to Worcester Coll. Oxford.

MS.

164. W. W. to W. Sotheby²

Grasmere March 12 1804.

Dear Sir

Agreeable to a request of Mr. Coleridge I take the liberty of sending you enclosed a promissory note for 100£ which he

¹ v. also Letters 152 (and note), 155. W.'s indignation is fully justified *The Ivy Seat* might be regarded as a 'wretched Parody' of the poems to Lucy. *The Forest Fay* draws on *The Ancient Mariner*.

² William Sotheby (1757–1833) poet, dramatist, and a

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informs me you have been so good as to advance for him: I have taken the liberty of drawing the note payable at *ten* months, which is two months later than the latest time mentioned by Mr. Coleridge; but Mr. Coleridge did not know that it would be *full as easy for me to advance the money at present as at any time earlier than ten months from this date.*

I do not doubt, my dear Sir, that you sympathize deeply with me in the melancholy occasion which calls such a man from his friends and country.

I have long owed you a letter of thanks for your kind attentions to my sister and myself, when upon our road to France. For this breach of duty I have no excuse to plead but that of common procrastination, and therefore throw myself entirely upon your indulgence.

When are we likely to have the pleasure of seeing you down in the country again; not soon I am afraid since Mr. Coleridge has been compelled to quit it. I need not say what pleasure it would give me to see you, and shew you the hidden wonders, and little boudoirs of our Paradise, such as flying travellers know nothing about.

I am much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me communicated by Mr. Coleridge, who may perhaps have told you that I have been very busy during the last six weeks, and am advancing rapidly in a Poetical Work, which though only introductory to another of greater importance, will I hope be found not destitute of Interest. I hope Mrs. and Miss Sotheby and the two defenders of their country naval and military have not forgotten their wanderings among our mountains.

I remain dear Sir with great respect and regard

Yours sincerely

W. Wordsworth.

prominent member of London literary society. Among those whom he entertained at his house were W. W., Scott, Coleridge, Rogers, Southey, Sir George Beaumont, Byron, and Moore, and he encouraged Coleridge to undertake *The Friend* and his Lectures on Drama. He published his first volume of Poems in 1790, but is perhaps best known for his translation of Wieland's *Oberon* (1798). Sotheby visited the Lake country with his wife and daughter in the early summer of 1802 (*v.* Coleridge to Sotheby, July 13 and 19, 1802).

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I ought not to forget my sister's thanks for your kindness and her remembrances—

Address: William Sotheby Esq., No. 47 Upper Seymour Street,
London.

(Gummed on to letter)

Grasmere March 12 1804.

I promise to pay Wm. Sotheby Esq., ten months after date, the Principal, and legal Interest of one hundred Pounds advanced by him to S. T. Coleridge on my account.

W. Wordsworth.

One shilling Four pence

MS. 165. W. W. to Thomas De Quincey

J(—) K(—)

Grasmere Monday March 19. [1804]

Dear Sir,

I received your Letter a day or two since: and now write merely (thanking you for it first) to inform you that about a week before I received your last I had written a letter to you and addressed it to Chester, East Priory. I am apprehensive that Letter may not reach you, since your family have left the place, and therefore have resolved to lose no time, in requesting you would be so good as to use such means as you think best for having the Letter forwarded to you: if it has not reached you already. Should you hear no tidings of it, it will probably be sent to the dead Letter Office in London and may be procured by application there. I cannot express to you how much pleasure it gave me to learn that my Poems had been of such eminent service to you as you describe. May God grant that you may persevere in all good habits, desires, and resolutions.

Such facts as you have communicated to me are an abundant recompense for all the labour and pains which the profession of Poetry requires, and without which nothing permanent or good can be produced. I am at present much engaged, and therefore I know you will excuse my adding more; I will only request that

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you will be so good as to write to me soon after you receive the Letter above spoken of, if you find a disposition to do so.

Believe me, with kind regards and esteem, your affectionate
W. Wordsworth.

Address: Thomas de Quincey, Esq., Worcester College, Oxford.

MS. 166. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

K(—)

Sunday evening March 24th 1804.

My dear Friend

Your two affectionate and deeply interesting letters called upon me for an immediate answer, but the first made me so unhappy about you that from very cowardice I did not write though still hoping for better news, and since the arrival of the second thrice welcome and joyful letter I have been literally at work from morning till night (not but that by stealing from the hours after bed-time I might have written). We have been engaged, Mary and I, in making a complete copy of William's poems for poor Coleridge to be his companions in Italy, and it was really towards the conclusion a work of great anxiety for we were afraid they would not reach London or Portsmouth in time for him, and his desire to have them almost made him miserable, while there was any doubt about it. The last packet we sent off would arrive in London, as we now learn, three days before his departure, a great comfort to us. Thinking of his banishment, his loneliness, the long distance he will be from all the human beings that he loves, it is one of my greatest consolations that he has those poems with him. There are about eight thousand lines. A great addition to the poem on my Brother's life he has made since C left us, 1500 lines, and since we parted from you a still greater; he has also written a few small poems. I hope my dear Friend a happy time for you and all of us will come, when we shall read these Poems to you. I am sure your heart will swell with exultation and joy. I ought to tell you that besides copying the verses for Coleridge we have re-copied them entirely for ourselves as we went along; for the manuscripts we took them from were in such a wretched condition, and so tedious to copy from—besides requiring William's almost constant superinten-

dance—that we considered it as almost necessary to save them alive that we should recopy them, for I think William would never have had the resolution to set us to work again. Judge then how fully we have been employed, what with nursing and the ordinary business of the house which is really not a little. Molly being far worse qualified for her place as it is at present than formerly, having a deal of irregular work, and also her strength having considerably failed her. Poor Soul we shall put up with her as long as we can, for I believe she will be heart-broken when she leaves us. The last letter we had from Coleridge brought us but dismal tidings—he had had a ten hours Diarrhoea with terrible spasms in his stomach and bowels, and was left very weak. he wrote last Tuesday and was to go to Portsmouth on Saturday. He was at Sir George Beaumont's in Grosvenor Square, a blessed chance! for Lady Beaumont is as tender in her attentions to him as if she were his sister, and both Sir G and she are human-hearted creatures, even as if they had been bred up and passed their lives among the best people of our own rank. C has taken his passage in a ship bound to Venice and Trieste—he is to stop at Gibraltar and touch Malta where he will see our Friend Stoddart who has a place under Government and with his wife resides there. C has not told us what his plans are, but most likely if his health be steady he will travel in Italy, and perhaps visit Mount Etna. We expect Mrs C and the children at Grasmere after Mrs Southey's confinement. Mary and John and I had intended going to Keswick but we are afraid to venture now for the Scarlet Fever is there; and indeed as Mrs C is willing to come to us every end will be answered as well, and having to go to Park House, we are not sorry to keep at home in the meantime. After we first heard about the fever we were very uneasy about C's children, but Mrs C says they have no direct communication with Keswick and if the danger seems to spread she will come off with them immediately to us. Your account of Tom made me long if possible more than ever that you should see our Baby. In many points he is a direct contrast to Tom—in others he resembles him, he is *not* a fat child, but exceedingly stout and tall—his legs are not well formed though strong, but I think his arms *are* well formed, but like Tom's they

are not, nor ever were babyish arms, they are like the arms of a *fattish* child of two years old (I mean in shape) and indeed *in size* they would not be small for a year and a half. He has in general rosy cheeks and his flesh is firm. When he was five weeks old he weighed 11 pounds and $\frac{3}{4}$ —at 6 months 19 pounds and at 9 months, namely last Sunday 23 pounds. So much for his Body. I cannot say that in slowness to anger he resembles Tom; he is an impatient Child, generally cries very loud when we put him on his clothes to go out, and is often angry though his anger is presently over and he seems to have a store of inward joy. It comes out of him one does not know why or wherefore in bursts and screams and delightful smiles. He is quick as lightning with eyes and head in hunting out sounds, turns here and there, but listening to a regular sound, his eyes and his whole face will be as steady as if he were thirty years old. he delights in hanging over the Syke as we call it, that diminutive Beck where we get our water, or indeed any murmuring stream fixes him at once, but when he is hunting the wind among the trees now here now there he is as quick as a little kitten. He is perfectly well and has always been as healthy as possible, except that he has a sort of roughness that looks like a scorbutic tumour upon his forehead, which itches violently in the evenings and is often very troublesome. We gave him Broth at one time but now we give him nothing but Bread and milk, thinking that animal food might increase the tumour, he has had something of it almost ever since birth but it has only been troublesome within these ten weeks. Perhaps without giving yourself or Dr Beddoes any trouble (for I should feel ashamed to abuse his goodness by making regular application about such a trifle) you might learn in the course of conversation with him what he thinks the best diet for children. We have been in daily expectation for this fortnight past of seeing Mr Clarkson or hearing from him. I wish he were with you again—he stays far longer than he talked of. It was a sad pity you had not your sister with you. Mary and I used to grieve sadly about your being left alone before we knew what you had suffered from it. But now I trust you are supported by the hope of so soon meeting your husband again, and will not be dejected by your loneliness. We have looked out for

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the Evening star constantly since we knew what a dear companion she was of yours. She stares at us from the northern side of Silver How, and sets considerably below the highest point of the hill; but for two nights we have seen neither moon nor stars, it has been storm rain and snow. I have almost finished my paper without taking notice of your kindness in speaking so immediately about my complaints to Doctor Beddoes and I am deeply sensible of Dr Beddoes goodness—Pray make my Brother's respectful remembrance to him, and thank him in his name and mine. We sent the prescription to Keswick yesterday as soon as we durst have any communication with Mr Edmondson for the Scarlet Fever has been in his house. I shall attend scrupulously to Dr Beddoes advice respecting Diet, and take the medicine regularly though I have been perfectly well since the last attack. In answer to Dr Beddoes enquiry respecting flatulence I must tell you that formerly I was very much troubled with it both in stomach and bowels, and am so now frequently though in a far less degree. I cannot say that I have observed that any particular sort of food that comes in the common course of our plain diet disagrees with me regularly though several things seem to do so when I am not quite well. When I am well my appetite is much larger than that of any of my female friends but it is very irregular. William and Mary are both well but dearest Mary is thin. John thrives better than she does. Yet she makes no complaints. The Hutchinsons have fixed next Thursday for leaving Gallow Hill and were to be at Penrith on Thursday or Friday, but if the weather does not improve they cannot travel so soon. Do write soon, remember that when I ask you to write I only mean tell us how you are—half a dozen lines of good news would be delightful, and even if you have nothing pleasurable to say it is better to know it than to guess at it.

William and Mary send their best and kindest love—We long very much to see Mr Clarkson or hear from him again. God bless you my dear Friend believe me ever faithfully and [affection]-ately yours

D. Wordsworth.

We have got the door made in the staircase. It is quite delightful. We often thank you and your sister for the pleasure it gives

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John. Whenever John gets a hurt we carry him to it and he is still in a moment, he sees himself in the glass or looks out into the orchard.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, No. 6 Sion Hill, Clifton, Bristol.

MS. 167. D. W. and W. W. to S. T. Coleridge

K(—)

[Grasmere] March 29th, [1804.]

p.m. April 3.

(D. writes)

My dearest Coleridge,

There is little chance that this letter will reach you, therefore I shall write but a few words. Our hearts are full of you. May God preserve you, and restore you to us, in health of Body and peace of mind! I cannot express to you how deeply we were shocked at your late terrible attack nor how very thankful we are to the Beaumonts for their kindness to you, indeed I love them most affectionately for it. We have had the severest gales of wind that we remember this winter in the beginning of the week,—at first we did not know but you might be out at sea in them, and we were happy indeed to hear that you were not. Your letter informing us of the arrival of all the poems did not reach us so soon as it ought to have done by several days. It had been mis-sent to Keswick.

William has begun another part of the Poem addressed to you. He has written some very affecting Lines,¹ which I wish you could have taken with you. He is perfectly well at present, works in the garden, and walks daily. To-day Mary, John, William, and I had a walk together in Bainriggs, and after we left W. he wrote twenty lines in the $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour before dinner. John is a rosy-cheeked Fellow, very strong, happy as a bird in the open air, and delights in every sound he hears, the crows high up in the sky, the wind in the trees, the little sykes by the Roadsides. He is of an impatient temper. We expect him very soon to get up from the ground in a passion, for when we do not go to him the moment he wants us the efforts he makes are astonishing. Poor little Fellow! he is going to encounter his first sorrow, he is

¹ i.e. *Prelude* vi. 246–331 (1805 text).

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to be weaned the beginning of next week. His Mother is very thin and looks very ill, but her appetite is good and she is tolerably well in general, but neither Wm nor I are easy under the idea of her suckling him any longer, for she looks so *very* ill, and is not strong. Before your Return I hope we shall be blessed with another little Baby. I shall be thankful if it be a girl, but not disappointed if it is not. We hope to see Sara for a couple of days next week. In about a fortnight I am to go to her, to help her to put her house in order; and a short time after my return home, when spring comes in with warm weather, we are all to go to see her. Mrs. Coleridge in her last letter said she would come over with the children. We hope in her next she will fix a time. They must all come, for we can have Thomas Ashburner's Bed. Could you but see them playing with our Grasmere Darling! I have got a prescription, by means of Mrs Clarkson from Dr Beddoes—Mr Edmundson has prepared the medicines and I shall take them regularly. I am very well at present. I am going on with my journal. I wish I could send you a copy of it when it is done. It is a tiresome thing to read long descriptions of places, but in Italy it would not seem tiresome, so far, far from us. If you get this letter, write to us yet once again; and never, dearest Friend! never miss an opportunity of writing when you are abroad. This Letter is but of memorandums, for I feel almost confident that it will not reach you. If it does, tell us what you have done about the Border Poems,¹ the watch, etc., etc.

Farewell, my beloved Coleridge, dear Friend, farewell. Believe me evermore your faithful Friend,

Dorothy Wordsworth.

(*W. writes*)

Grasmere, March 29.

My dearest Coleridge,

Your last letter but one informing us of your late attack was the severest shock to me, I think, I have ever received. I walked over for the letter myself to Rydale and had a most affecting return home, in thinking of you and your narrow escape. I will not speak of other thoughts that passed through me, but I can-

¹ Border Poems: Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*, pub. 1802-3.

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not help saying that I would gladly have given 3 fourths of my possessions for your letter on *The Recluse* at that time. I cannot say what a load it would be to me, should I survive you and you die without this memorial left behind. Do, for heaven's sake, put this out of the reach of accident immediately. We are most happy that you have gotten the Poems, and that they have already given you so much pleasure. Heaven bless you for ever and ever. No words can express what I feel at this moment. Farewell, farewell, farewell.

W. W.

The Poems were transcribed in a great hurry and I find on looking at our Copy, which was made at the same time, that several lines have been overlooked here and there. One of the most important in the sonnet to Toussaint,

Though fallen thyself never to rise again,
is omitted. In the fifth book of the poem to you, after 'fear itself,' 'natural or supernatural alike' omitted

Upon a gossamer thread, boundless th'embrace
Of his intelligence he sifts, etc.

In the same book,

Too learned or too good; but wanton fresh
And bandied up and down by love and hate,

omitted in my copy.

I ought to have asked your permission for the scholars and their obolus,¹ etc. I am now, after a halt of near three weeks, started again; and I hope to go forward rapidly. Adieu again—and again—and again.

We entreat you to write for ever and ever, and at all opportunities. But this request must be unnecessary. We shall be so distressingly anxious.

It was very fortunate that you were so earnest about having the poems. It was an intricate and weary job; but I do think that one half of those last three books were preserved by it. I shall never, I hope, get into such a scrape again.

Address: Mr Coleridge, Post Office, Portsmouth, *to remain till called for.*

¹ *Prelude* iii. 486 (1805).

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MS. 168. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere Friday night April 14th [1804]

My dear Madam

First and foremost, and without apology I must inform you that the Cask arrived safe at Grasmere this morning to the great joy of the whole house, for notwithstanding the Carrier had assured us that it would find its way right forward we were afraid of some delay or mistake in consequence of the irregular address. My Sister and I join with my Brother in begging that you and Sir George will accept our Sincere and best thanks for your great kindness in sending it to us. My Brother has indeed been in much better health since we began to drink the ordinary ale which we brew, and I am sure the pleasure he will have in thinking of Sir George and Lady Beaumont will add not a little to the good effects of this better liquor; we shall all drink of it, for though we were educated and lived as water-drinkers by choice for many years after we grew up we have, for different reasons, all been obliged to drink malt liquor; I mention this because I know that you will be pleased to hear that the good effects of your kind and delicate attentions to my Brother's health are likely to be shared by the rest of his family.

I have many things to thank you for—I have been indebted to you and Sir George for many pleasures; but chiefly let me speak of the comfort we have had in the thought that our Friend was under your roof after his last illness. Believe me, my dear Madam, we feel no common gratitude for the consolation and happiness you bestowed on him by your affectionate care and tendance. But for you I know not how he would have got over the melancholy days of weakness and sickness previous to his departure from London. We have only had one letter from him since his arrival at Portsmouth, but, three days ago Mrs Coleridge informed us that she had heard from him, and that he was on the point of going on board the Vessel. I fear we shall not hear again, for when he is in bad spirits he has not heart to write, and I dare not hope that he could be otherwise till he had lost sight of his native land, and found himself alone with his own thoughts.

Happily he has never yet been sea-sick, and the sea air agrees with him, so that, knowing the activity of his mind and its self-tranquillizing power in perfect solitude, we have no fears about his health during the voyage, and we try to console ourselves in the midst of regrets that we must for ever feel, with the hope that his long absence from his country and Friends will have a happy termination, and, indeed with the melancholy certainty that if he had not gone, his life, for many years at least, must have been a life of sickness.

My Sister and I feel ourselves greatly delighted and honoured by the wish you express to become acquainted with us. For our parts we have looked forward with much pleasure to the time of your revisiting Keswick in the hope that we should become personally acquainted with you. Mrs Coleridge has informed us that you have had some intention of coming this Summer, but Mr C. has said nothing about it, for his letters to us have been rare, and those mere notes, scarcely memorandums, of the state of his health;—he has spoken of nothing at length but the comfort he has had in your kindness. Keswick is a long way from Grasmere but still we shall hope to see something of you there, though we, having a little Baby Attendant, are not very easily moved to a great distance. We should be most happy to conduct you round about our own Vale, and into the Bye nooks unvisited by travellers; my Brother often wishes that Sir George Beaumont could see this or that place which in his long rambles through the recesses of our mountains he has discovered. Our house is literally and truly a Cottage, not an advertisement Cottage with Coach-house, or even Stable, but a little low-roofed building, with its entrance through the kitchen; we have, however, one lodging-room which we can spare, and if you and Sir George would do us the honour of staying under our Roof, and take up with our homely fare it would give us the highest pleasure.

Just as I wrote the last word a farewell letter was brought to us from Coleridge, concluded in the moment when the ship was going to sail. It was like another parting to us when we were assured that the last step was taken, that he is now really gone. It is a long time since we have seen his dear children, but Mrs

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Coleridge has been so good as to promise that she will come and stay with us and bring them all—Derwent was left at Grasmere by his Father when he went to London: he stayed seven weeks and returned home in perfect health, with fresh roses on his baby face, but he has since that time been frequently very far from well.

My dear Madam, accept my sincerest thanks for your very kind letter—I cannot express how much pleasure this proof of your goodness has given me. I have left your letter a whole week unanswered, which I should not have done but my Brother was from home for the first three days, and since, my time has been wholly taken up with my little Nephew, whom I have had under my care night and day to wean him; an office of anxiety which has taken up most of my thoughts, it being necessary to keep him almost out of sight of his Mother—he is now nearly reconciled to his Loss. The Child (it is now 9 oclock in the evening) has just this moment waked and I am writing with him upon my knee. I ought to have said how happy we were all made by hearing of the gratification which my Brother's poems had given you, but I find the Child will not rest upon my knee and I must feed and attend upon him—I am unwilling to lose another post lest you should be surprized at my silence, therefore you will excuse me if I conclude abruptly. My Brother and Sister unite with me in most respectful Regards to you and Sir George. Believe me my dear Madam,

very sincerely yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

P.S. Below is a sonnet addressed to Sir George, which my Brother has desired me to transcribe. It was among those which Mr Coleridge had, and my Brother requested of him to copy it for Sir George, which as he was so much hurried he most likely forgot to do. He had all my Brother's poems with him, and he told us that you were going to take the trouble of transcribing some of them. If you recollect any of them of which you have no copy that you or Sir George may wish to have, pray be so kind as to inform us, and it will give us great pleasure to send them to you.

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Beaumont! it was thy wish that I should rear
A seemly Cottage in a chosen dell;
This did'st thou plan for me that I might dwell
In neighbourhood with one to me most dear,
That undivided we from year to year
Might work in our high calling—And full well
Such hope would please us both, which we must quell
Alas! through some necessities severe—
And should these slacken, honor'd Beaumont, still
Even then we may perhaps in vain implore
Leave of our fate thy pleasure to fulfil—
Whether this boon be granted us or not
Old Skiddaw will be proud, and that same spot
Be dear unto the Muses evermore—¹

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

MS. 169. *W. W. to Richard Sharp*²

K(—)

Grasmere, April 29th, 1804.

My dear Sir,

I have long considered myself as owing you a Letter, though Coleridge was so good as to be my Amanuensis some time ago, and expressed my acknowledgments of your kindness in writing to me and your present of the *Minstrelsy of the Border*. You did flatter me with a sort of hope that I should receive from you an MS poem of your own, which I have expected with no little eagerness; but as you did not mention it in your letter I rather conclude that you have not sent it along with the Books, a loss which I shall the less regret; as from a multitude of unforeseen and cross accidents I have not yet received the parcel. My Sister writes to Charles Lamb to-day; and it will be forwarded, along with several other things which have partly caused the

¹ It will be noted that the text of the Sonnet differs considerably from the published version (Oxf. W., p. 251).

² Richard Sharp (1759–1835), M.P. on the Whig side 1806–12 and 1816–19; all his life keenly interested in politics and literature, and so brilliant a talker that he was known as 'Conversation Sharp'. In his youth he knew Johnson and Burke, and later was 'the close and intimate friend' of Rogers. He often visited the Lake country.

delay immediately. If the Poem be not in the parcel I shall be greatly disappointed if I do not see it soon by some other means.

Among the many inducements which I have had to write to you, a wish to return the thanks of my family, joined with my own for your kindness, and more than kindness, to our dear and honoured friend Coleridge, during his late residence in Town, has not been the least. He spoke in the warmest terms of the many affectionate attentions he received from you; and believe me, dear Sir, it gave me the greatest pleasure to think, not only on his account, but on yours also, that such an intercourse had taken place between you; as I am sure nothing could be more grateful to your heart than to be useful to such a Man, going upon an errand in which all his friends must be deeply interested. I need not say how much our fireside has suffered upon the melancholy occasion, and what a loss he will be to us.

We were indebted to you for a world of pleasure in our Scotch Tour; the how, the when, and the where I will explain when we have the satisfaction of seeing you here again, which I hope will be ere long. The leaves, which ought to have been out a month ago, are now budding fast, and our little orchard is in the full height of its primrose beauty. Summer will soon be here; and, as I take for granted you don't mean to expose yourself to be kidnapped in Germany, and most other parts of the continent are probably too distant for your limited time, we may look forward with some confidence to the pleasure of seeing you here. You will be very welcome; and I have made some discoveries in Grasmere, which I shall be delighted to shew you, little unthought-of nooks, that are as beautiful as they are shy.

You would perhaps see in the London papers an estate at Troutbeck advertised for sale, it consists of a furnished cottage, a decent sort of a house for this Country, that is, considerably better than mine, and thirty acres of Land. The house is on the side of Troutbeck Vale, opposite to your chosen spot and about a mile further up the valley, but in every respect ten thousand times inferior to yours; no view of Windermere, and in my opinion by no means an eligible situation. It is at present occupied by Ibbetson, the Painter.

I have been very busy these last 10 weeks, having written

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between two and three thousand lines, accurately near three thousand, in that time; namely, 4 books, and a third of another, of the Poem which I believe I mentioned to you on my own early life. I am at present in the 7th book of this work, which will turn out far longer than I ever dreamt of; it seems a frightful deal to say about one's self; and, of course, will never be published (during my lifetime, I mean) till another work has been written and published, of sufficient importance to justify me in giving my own history to the world. I pray God to give me life to finish these works, which, I trust, will live, and do good; especially the one to which that, which I have been speaking of as far advanced, is only supplementary. Farewell. Remember me kindly to Mr. Rogers, and believe me, with best regards from my wife and sister, and with the greatest esteem and respect on my part,

Yours sincerely,
W. Wordsworth.

Do favour me with a letter if you can find time, letting me know whether we shall have the pleasure of seeing you this summer and when. My little Boy can crawl about the floor famously and is wondrous stout, with admirable health.

Address: Richard Sharp, Esq^{re}, Mark Lane, London.

MS. 170. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Grasmere May 3rd [1804]

My dear Friend,

We have been long very anxiously expecting to hear from you and twenty times been on the point of writing, but we have thought that surely the next post would bring us a letter. Mr Clarkson promised to come and see us before his departure; we did not much wonder that he broke his promise, but, as he did not write to us we imagined he was still at Eusemere, till Sara Hutchinson told us that he had been gone a week before they came to Park House. Since that time William has been at P. H. and Sara has been here. William has seen the Luffs but we can hear nothing of you—I write at a venture to Bristol, in the hope that the letter will be forwarded. My dear Friend we have many

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and many an anxious thought about you, do write the moment you receive this if but a line to tell us *how* you are, and *where* you are. Mary has long talked about writing to you, but she will put it off till we hear from you as it is a pity to risque a long letter. I am going to Park House to-morrow, and shall stay till the Wednesday before Whitsuntide; I have fixed that time for my return in order that I may be at home a few days before our new servant comes, to put the house in perfect order.

Aggy Fisher is dead and Molly is promoted to the high office of her Brother's Housekeeper and attendant upon his single cow for he has sold the rest of the stock and lett the land. It is a great comfort to us that Molly has been taken from us in so quiet and natural a way, for we were afraid of breaking her heart by telling her that she was not fit for her place which indeed has been the truth for the last six months at least. At present Sally Ashburner is with us—We are too late I fear to get a good Servant, for they are all hired in this neighbourhood. Poor Coleridge has sailed in the Speedwell. Mrs C and the children are well. Mrs Southey was safely delivered of a Daughter on Monday night. Southey is going to London. William accompanies me to Luff's to-morrow and on Monday he goes by Matterdale to Keswick. The Wilkinsons are going to leave Armathwaite and their goods are all to be sold. Books Drawings pictures &c. &c. The first day of sale next Tuesday. We are all well. Mary looks much better and is much better than when I wrote to you last. She weaned John three weeks ago being with child; he has had the Cow-pox since and thrives as well as possible. He can get up from the ground by himself with the help of a chair, but I do not think he will walk for some time. I shall cast many a long look towards Eusemere as I walk down by the Lake side on Sunday. God bless you my dear Friend, I hope there will be a letter from you before I return.

Believe me ever more your affectionate

Dorothy Wordsworth.

We have had nothing but harsh winter weather till within the last ten days, and now the vale is painted green all at once.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, 6 Sion Hill, Clifton, Bristol.

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MS.

171. D. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere 3rd May [1804?]

My dear Brother,

Pray keep this parcel in your Chambers till it is called for by some person sent by Mrs Marsh of Lyme Dorsetshire. I shall write to inform her that it is in your Chambers and shall desire her to engage some person to call for it who may be going to London from Lyme.

We are all well. We were very glad to hear of John's safe arrival in China. If you hear any more let us know immediately. We all join in kind love.

Your affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS.

172. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

K(—)

Wednesday. Park House. May¹ 9th 1804.

My dear Friend,

I left Grasmere on Saturday morning and spent a whole day with William crossing Grisedale Hawes. We reached Luff's at about 7 o'clock in the Evening, met him in the passage bearing a glass of water to his wife who was ill in bed upstairs—very ill indeed she was, but we left her better on Sunday morning. Luff himself was in bad spirits and not perfectly well. William went by Matterdale to Keswick on foot—he rode before me from Luff's to Liulph's tower where we left our horse and parted at Airey force. I arrived here just as Sara and Tom were coming from Dacre Church. It was a fine day, the fields looked delightfully green and the place altogether exceedingly pleasant. We had a happy meeting, for Tom who had been exceedingly ill in a sort of dumb rheumatism with swelled legs was recovering as fast as possible with the fine weather, and Sara though still very thin is well and in good spirits. My dear Friend I write to you now with more comfort than when I wrote to you from Grasmere

¹ May: D. W. misdates April.

(a day or two before I left home), for we have had, though not exactly the same account of you that we wished, at least a cheerful one of your health. We wished to have heard at least that you were coming to Eusemere this summer; for if you sell the place you may never stay there any more. The Luffs were like us very anxious to hear about you—they had had no letter. I determined then to go to Eusemere as soon as possible, so yesterday afternoon Sara and I went. Ellen Bewsher told us about Mr Clarkson's letter to Thomas Wilkinson and that Ellen was gone to Market. We strolled about in the garden for about $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour before Ellen arrived. The afternoon was warm and we sat down upon the grass, the Lake was beautiful, and all about the house neat and flourishing—need I say how full our hearts were? Ellen gave us a kind welcome. We drank tea by the kitchen fire and had nice Bread and every thing comfortable. We went upstairs and when we entered the drawing room the view from the window struck upon us both in the same moment in the same way, as if it were an unearthly sight, a scene of *heavenly* splendour—the inside of the house was clean and in nice order. Ellen had been to Penrith to fetch some Tow to spin for kitchen Towels. She had a couple of leeches in a bottle with which she was going to bleed herself. She wants you at home sadly, and as you do not come she wishes for her Master. I do not think that you will stay long in London, so I hope you will find this letter with your Father's a few days after its arrival and that we shall hear from you immediately after—I directed my last to Bristol. Sara and I were at Penrith on Monday bringing many necessaries for the house. I am going to help her put up the Beds. It is a sad pity they have built the house so high upon the hill. It is a nice dry comfortable place and [the] walks are very delightful. The walk here is very pleasant over Dacre Beck—(they are miserable stepping stones to be sure;—we got wet-shod, but that may easily be remedied) through the fields and through your own Dunmallet—could you but have heard the thrushes and seen the thousand thousand primroses under the trees!—I hope my dear Friend that you will be able to confirm to us the good reports of your husband respecting the state of your health and we will try and reconcile ourselves to you not

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coming down this year. Give my kind love to him and tell him that he must not be long in coming to Grasmere after his arrival. Tell Tom that I am glad to hear he is such a good Boy and a good Scholar and that I shall be very glad to shake him by the hand again. I suppose he is too much of a man to be kissed except perhaps just at meeting and parting. I shall leave the rest of the paper for Sara to add a few words.

God bless you for ever my dear friend.

Yours most affectionately D. Wordsworth.

Remember me very kindly to your Father and Robert and make my best respects to your mother and Sister.

My dear Mrs Clarkson. I have intended to write to you ever since I came here, but still put it off because I wished to see Eusemere. Dear Dorothy will have told you all about our visit there—I cannot tell you with what longing I have looked towards the meeting and wished you at Home again. God bless you! I trust you are better, but it is a sad thing that you must not return down this summer—I had been so delighted in the [no]tion of your being our neighbour—kind love to Mr Clarkson.

If it be not a fatigue Do write

S. H.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, Bury, Suffolk.

MS. 173. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere May 25th 1804.

My dear Madam

I thank you from my heart for the pleasure we have all received from your most kind letter. I left home two or three days after its arrival, and during a delightful journey over the mountains, under the crown of Helvellyn to Patterdale, and along the shore of Ullswater, it was one of my most pleasing thoughts that when I was safely lodged at the house of my Friend I would recount to Lady Beaumont the history of my journey and tell her about the dear Friends whom I had left at home—not all at home either, for I parted with my Brother at Airey Force; we had walked over the hills together, lodged at Patterdale, and the next morning we rode on horseback as far

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as Liulph's Tower, walked up to the Force—he struck over the hills to Keswick, and I went onwards down the Lake and two miles further. My Brother spent three days at Keswick with Mrs Coleridge; she is well and in good spirits, and the children, Hartley especially, seem to be in good health; he goes to school, and, I believe, takes to the performance of his duty even as other children of his years. My Brother says he should scarcely have known Sara (the last time he saw her was the very day of your departure from Keswick) she is no longer, as I dare say you remember her, all peace and meekness, the gentle 'Lady Abbess', but a little quick creature here and there and everywhere, as lively as Hartley himself. She is thin and very small. Our Baby who is six months younger is almost twice her size. When I began to write, but I have wandered from my purpose, I was going to tell you why I had not answered your letter much sooner but indeed except for the satisfaction of my own heart that knows full well the claims your kindness has upon me I should have said nothing about it for you will be half inclined to smile at me for talking of business and want of leisure in this Solitude. I must first tell you however that I only mean want of leisure to perform a duty which I could not resolve to perform without making a pleasure of it, for I have had time to write a hundred letters if I could have been contented to sit down without the quiet possession of myself and my own thoughts. I was a fortnight from home with my Sister's Sister, who is just come with her Brother to a farm three miles from Penrith. She was fitting up his house and I went to welcome her into the Country, and help her with her work, such as fitting up beds, curtains etc. etc. etc.—We worked diligently all day, and in the evenings were glad to walk out together. I am pleased to think that when I tell you of this Friend of ours you are prepared with a ready interest for she is one of whom you must have heard Coleridge speak, Miss Sara Hutchinson, one of his most dear and intimate friends, even before she was so nearly connected with us by my Brother's marriage. You will be glad to hear that she is come to be an inhabitant of this Country both for his sake and ours: she is fixed at a very sweet place, and seems to be perfectly contented; and pleased with everything around her. Since my

return home I have had no leisure, I had almost said no comfort till today. I have really been overwrought with positive labour. Our old Servant, whom you may have chanced to hear Coleridge speak of as a drollery belonging to the Cottage, has left us and we have been engaged in a Whitsuntide cleaning, colouring and painting etc. etc. before the coming of our new Servant whom we expect today. It is an affair of great consequence to us that we should be well served, and that all things in our little establishment should be regularly arranged, which has not been the case for the last six weeks while we have had no servant but a little Girl—therefore, my Sister not being very strong, I was glad to take upon myself the charge of putting things in order. A long story you will say, and indeed, though, as I have said, I explained my long silence for my own satisfaction I should not have said so much about it if at the same time I had not been giving you some idea of the manner in which we live, and had an opportunity of speaking of Miss Hutchinson who is so much esteemed by our Common Friend; for I think one of the duller things in the world is a letter filled with apologies for not writing sooner.

My dear Madam I was most happy to find by your last letter that you had not, as we feared from what Mrs. C. told us, given up the thought of coming into Cumberland this Summer. My Sister and I long ardently for the pleasure of seeing you, and knowing *more* of you, for already we seem to be well acquainted with you. I cannot express how much pleasure it has given us that my Brother's Poems have afforded so much delight to you and Sir George. I trust in God that he may live yet to perform greater and better things for the benefit of those that shall come after us, and for the pure and good of these times. You will rejoice to hear that he has gone on regularly, I may say rapidly, with the poem of which Coleridge showed you a part, and that his health, though at present he is troubled with a weakness in one of his eyes, is upon the whole good. He tells me that he intends writing to Sir George immediately; but as he is so apt to procrastinate I dare not say that it will certainly be within this fortnight, but he may speak for himself before I close this letter; at present he is walking, and has been out of doors these two hours though it has rained heavily all the morning. In wet

weather he takes out an umbrella, chuses the most sheltered spot, and there walks backwards and forwards, and though the length of his walk be sometimes a quarter or half a mile, he is as fast bound within the chosen limits as if by prison walls. He generally composes his verses out of doors, and while he is so engaged he seldom knows how the time slips away, or hardly whether it is rain or fair.

I wrote so far several days ago. We have since had the satisfaction of hearing that our Friend was arrived at Gibraltar. No doubt he has written to you. It is a great comfort to us to know that he has got so far on his voyage, but indeed the accounts he gives of the state of his health are not very chearing. Only the very day before he wrote he had been bowed down as before by a rainy afternoon, and as soon as the rain abated he was well again. I fear, indeed, too much I fear that the change of climate will work no permanent cure, but that when he returns to England again he will be as subject to the weather as heretofore. I agree with you, woful as the change will be to him, that, unless a thorough change be wrought in his habit of Body, it will be wise and proper that he should fix his residence in the driest part of our Island. We have had nothing but rainy weather for this fortnight past—to make us some amends the mountains are more than usually beautiful, almost as green as the valley itself, but we shall be tired out if we have not a little more sunshine before another fortnight is over. My Brother and Sister and the little Boy are only waiting for fair weather to make the same journey from which I am returned. My Sister and the Child will be absent three weeks, a long time for me! I do not know how the house will sound without his voice. I shall find a loss even of the very worst he can do—his passionate cries and screams—he is a turbulent Fellow and often when he is in my arms I wish for a little quietness, but when he is away the heartsomeness of the house will be gone too, at least so it will seem for a little while, especially when I am quite alone, but my Brother will not stay more than a week or ten days. I wish I could tell you that we had had the pleasure of drinking of the brown stout. It is not yet tapped, but we are now drinking the last Cask of our own ale. We shall, as you were so good as to direct, put a tea-cup-full

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of sweet Oil into the Cask. I hope my dear Madam that before the Summer is over we shall have the great delight, which we talk much about, of conducting you into the recesses of our Vale; beautiful as it shews itself to the Traveller passing through you will say that its richest treasures are only found when sought after. I ought to beg your pardon for sending a sheet so full of blunders—written with so bad a pen—I do indeed presume upon your goodness, or I should keep this back and write another letter. My Brother and Sister unite with me in most respectful remembrances, and every good wish to you and Sir George—Believe me, my dear Madam,

Very sincerely yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

May 29th

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

K(—)¹ 174. *D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*

[Keswick. June 4, 1804.]

I have always felt at Eusemere, when I have entered one of the rooms without thinking of what was to be seen—particularly when I had been there only a short time—that there was something unearthly in the prospect. So it seemed the last time. I was entirely occupied in the thought of you, and past times, when I went into the drawing room; and, indeed, I think that I never before saw any sight that was so purely, so *heavenly* beautiful.

MS. 175. *D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere June 20th 1804

My dear Madam

I write to you from my solitary cottage on this the seventh day of my solitude. Yesterday week I accompanied my Brother and Sister and the Child in our little carriage to Keswick (I dare say you will recollect some discussions about this same carriage which was purchased for our Scotch Tour). By the Bye we

¹ Not among Clarkson Letters in the B.M.

find it a great family comfort. We arrived at Greta Hall at six o'clock in the evening to the great joy of all the family for they had been long burning with desire to see the child. My Brother walked on before to warn them of our coming—Derwent was half mad with pleasure—they said he ran up and down the room shouting 'Mary's coming, Dorothy's coming' (he always calls us by these names) 'get the green stool for Johnny!' and he set the green stool in the middle of the floor to receive him. I know how much you love children in general and how very dearly Coleridge's children, therefore I am not afraid of letting my heart loose while I talk about them—how his dear Father would have been delighted if he could but have seen him at that moment! Mrs Coleridge ran to meet us with Sara in her arms—Mrs Lovel and Mrs Southey followed and all shouted with surprize at the sight of John. They had heard a great deal of his strength and size, but he was far stouter than they expected, and 'he has such a noble countenance!' they exclaimed. Little Darling! their praises wrought no pleasure in him, for as soon as he entered the house he was overcome with terror, screamed and clung about his Mother or me. For at least five minutes I could not get over a shock which I felt at the first glance of my eye upon Sara, she seemed so very little, such a slender delicate creature, fair as a snow-drop and was then almost as pale. But when she twirled about upon the carpet the exquisite grace of her motions, her half-Lady, half-Spirit Form and her interesting countenance made her an object of pure delight. She is as quick as a Fairy—everything about her diminutive except her eyes which may be called majestic—indeed I never saw finer eyes. Hartley is grown taller; he is still exceedingly slender, and there is so much thought and feeling in his face that it is scarcely possible for a person with any tenderness of mind and discrimination to look at him with indifference. It seemed to me that all that was left of the *Child* was wearing out of his face, but this might be partly accidental, as he had very little colour in his cheeks, and sometimes may have more. Mrs Coleridge is fat and looks well, she seemed to be in pretty good spirits. As soon as possible after my Sister returns she intends bringing all her children over to spend a fortnight or three weeks with us.

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My dear Lady Beaumont, we are all most truly sorry that we shall not have the happiness of seeing you this Summer. I know not what I long most to shew you—I think my little darling John, for I am sure the very sight of him would give you as great a delight as you have ever felt from any thing not known and loved before. He is not a handsome Boy, at least not *beautiful*, but there is a something like greatness in his countenance, a noble manliness which makes the first view of him catch hold of everybody, and keeps them looking at him. It is so with Derwent Coleridge, but from a different cause, for they are the very opposite of each other. John has nothing of the Baby about him but his youth, and Derwent is Baby all over. I wish very much to have you sitting with us upon our orchard Seat upon some still Summer evening. You would love the quiet things around us, if only for Coleridge's sake to whom they were so dear—but indeed I wish for the pleasure of introducing you to *all* our pleasures. Surely you will be able to come next Summer, though not this,—perhaps Coleridge will be then returned.

I have to thank Sir George for a delightful companion to our fireside, his drawing of the Applethwaite Dell. I cannot express how much pleasure I have had in looking at it (it hangs above the chimney-piece) while I have been left alone—it has set me on to thinking and musing for many a ten minutes. We have only had the drawings from Keswick about a fortnight, having waited for an opportunity of getting them conveyed in perfect safety. The Conway Castle hangs in my Bedroom, and I study it while I am dressing, but though it has given me great pleasure and though the first effect of the man looking out of the window towards the sea impressed me very much, yet I am not half so fond of it as of the Cottage, its dashing waters, and the corner of old Skiddaw. I like the latter more and more, the other does not improve upon me. When we have the pleasure of seeing you we intend to petition for another to take its place. I believe it was my Brother's choice, and at first he was disappointed that we did not like it as well as Applethwaite, but he, as we do, finds that Applethwaite improves more upon him—he thinks that the reason why the inside of Conway Castle at first gave

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him proportionately greater pleasure was that he saw it amongst many others, and that it is more interesting with softer scenes to set it off—or rather call it out.

I hope you may have heard from Coleridge ere this, but indeed I half think that his neglect of writing may be considered by his Friends as a proof of favour and affection, for he has never written to us. I heartily wish he may not have been becalmed in the Mediterranean; however it is, I hope that he is long before now arrived at the end of his voyage, and that we shall soon know it.

My Brother will be at home again in the course of a week, but Johnny and his Mother will stay three weeks longer at Park House. I parted with them at Threlkeld last Thursday morning; I walked through St. John's Vale and came from Legburthwaite on horseback the same evening (you know both these vales). I had a most delightful journey. My Sister tells me that John suffered greatly from change of place and the want of me for the first three days after their arrival at Park-house. My Sister had the Rheumatism in her thighs when she left home which made her unable to follow him about and carry him in her arms, so all the time he was at Keswick he was never happy with her and never felt himself *safe* but in my arms. At Park-house, she being still unable to stir with him, he was at first quite wretched, but when she wrote to me he had got reconciled to his aunt Sara and some other Friends: otherwise I think I should have set forward to Park-house immediately, for I should have been much afraid of his over-fatiguing his Mother—she is now with Child, and we expect her to be confined before the end of autumn. You can hardly guess how much I want them all at home again.

I had intended saying something about the high opinion you have formed of me. Coleridge I know is far too partial in his judgments of me. I am sure that you will be sadly disappointed in me when we meet, but I trust that when you know more of me and all of us you will love us.

Adieu my dear Madam—Believe me

affectionately yours Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London; *re-addressed to* Coleorton Hall, Loughborough.

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MS.

176. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

K(—)

Grasmere 18th July 1804.

I was too much affected by your last letter to be able to write immediately, and now it is ten days since I received it. [So] do not therefore think that I have been neglectful of you, or ready to part with those painful feelings of sympathy which it caused. No my dear Friend I have thought of you. We have all thought of you continually, for there is always something to bring you to our minds along with other thoughts. Your Mother has been in the grave as I guess these fourteen days, her death is mentioned in the last Norwich paper which we see every week, but Mary had brought us a confirmation, I will not say of our fears, for in the state in which she was what else could be hoped for? I trust you are now steadily calm and can think with pleasure of the quiet and silence in which she lies. My dear Friend I need not speak to *you* of the many consolations that are to be found while you lament this loss, her past declining health, the fear which must have hung over her spirits, and which her friends could never have got rid of, of a return of the paralytic attacks which she had had before and which might have left her to linger on shattered both in Body and mind. She has lived to see her children men and women grown, no longer *needing* her care, dutiful and good, a comfort to their father and each other. We are very anxious to see your Husband, that we may know how you are chiefly—but I want very much to see him and talk to him. Mary's letter was written I believe after she was at Eusemere—she would tell you how gloriously beautiful the place seemed to her; she was sad at parting from it, and at seeing it even so very beautiful. Mr Clarkson, dear good Man! had been as proud of making it neat for its new owner, as ever he was before, and he seemed to feel with true generosity of soul as if, though the produce of the soil were no longer his, the best part of it was there to be reaped by both of you, yours for as 'rich' a 'use' as heretofore. Mary wrote to you after she was at Eusemere—she had told me that she had written which made me the less desirous to comply with your request that I should write as soon as I received your last. I had great comfort in thinking of the

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pleasure you would receive from her letter, but Mr Clarkson had told her that he thought you would not receive it because she had directed it to Sion Hill. I think, surely your letter would be forwarded to you and you must have got it, if not, of course by sending you may have it. I shall be very much grieved if it did not reach you in proper time. Mary returned from Park House in perfect health, her lameness gone—no heart burn—and very strong. I trust she will now be well till Johnny's little Sister is born—which we expect will be in the first second or third week in September—Sara Hutchinson is to be with us at the time and we shall have no nurse. I am weary with wishing that you could see Johnny. I think he is not so handsome as he used to be, but he is strong and has the most sensible countenance I ever saw, sensible with dignity, not sharpness, and yet he is as quick as a Bird. But, God bless him! he has one grievous fault, he is terribly passionate, reminding me by contrast, fifty times in a day of what you told me of your dear Tom, that he was slow to anger. He is much more passionate than before he left home, this is no doubt in part the natural growth of a month, but far more that he was not so *regularly* attended to as at home; his Mother was unable at first to follow him, the strange place and the strange faces fretted him, and after he had got the better of this, sometimes he had over many nurses and sometimes over few—the dear Lamb! I call him so in spite of his impatience for no Lamb was ever gentler and sweeter and more loving—he hangs about us and hugs us round our necks, and at night when I go to bed with him he laughs for joy and puts his sweet little arm round my neck. We have all at this moment (I was called from my writing to see him) been watching him climb up the orchard steps—you know what a difficult road it is. Young Ladies who are not used to it hobble up and down though in full health and strength; he went all the way from the new door to the very top of the steps entirely without help, with the utmost caution but no cowardice and never made a false step—you may be sure we followed his heels up the steps. We find continual comfort and pleasure in the new door—which we love far better for having been first thought of by you and your sister. We expect Mrs Coleridge and all the children to-morrow. We should

have rather over much of the noise if we had not the other house, but we intend to make a nurse maid of Mary Stamper and to let her and the children stay mostly there. We have had no more news of Coleridge—we now begin to be anxious about him. We are also somewhat anxious about my Brother John—lest he should fall into the hands of the French¹—Poor Mrs Ibbetson is very ill, she has a little girl a month old and it is to be feared that she herself is in a consumption, the child is remarkably small, but is so very quiet that one must believe she is in health—she is a pretty [?] a most affecting image of perfect peace, with helplessness. The poor Old Lady is almost as helpless and frets the day through about her daughter—Mrs Lloyd has been safely delivered of a fourth son and is doing well. Priscilla called here one night in her Road from Keswick. She had been at Brathay a month and we had not heard of her. William is very well—he begs to be most tenderly remembered to you—he has given himself up to leisure ever since he went to Park House, but he is now going to begin with his poem and I hope will go on as before. God grant that you may be here next summer. We shall then have the happiness of reading it with you. I am now writing upon *your* writing Box. Oh my dear Friend how dearly do I prize it! how much was I moved at sight of it when they brought it home to me! I had not heard that it was coming. One of your hens and a cock came at the same time and they have learnt to come to the door as if they belonged to us. The neighbours are fond of the hen, she is so very beautiful. Johnny runs after it and calls Da! Da! Da! which he does after all living things having att[emp]ted at Park House to call the Dog ‘Dash! Dash! Dash!’ I hope you will write as soon as you can—remember I do not mean such a long letter as your last which it was indeed very good of you to write—only a few words to tell us how your health is, and if you are tranquil and composed in mind. We are very glad you have got a kind-natured woman to attend upon you, it was absolutely necessary in Mr Clarkson’s absence.

¹ On Feb. 15, 1804, the East India Fleet returning from China was attacked by a superior French force under Admiral Linois, at the entrance to the Straits of Malacca, which they were successful in beating off. v. *Gentleman’s Magazine*, 1804, pp. 873, 963–4, 1232, and *The Farrington Diary*, Aug. 7, 1806.

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Farewell my dear Friend. Mary's kindest love. May God bless you and restore you to health and may we meet again next summer.

Ever your affectionate
Dorothy Wordsworth.

I shall direct to Dr Beddoes—sure at least that you will receive the letter.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson, at Dr. Beddoes', Clifton, Bristol.

MS. *177. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*
M(—) G. C. K(—)

Grasmere, July 20. 1804.

Dear Sir George,

Lady Beaumont in a letter to my sister told her some time ago that it was your intention to have written to me, but knowing my aversion to letter writing you were unwilling to impose upon me the trouble of answering. I am much obliged to you for the honour you intended me, and deeply sensible of your delicacy. If a man were what he ought to be, with such feelings and such motives as I have, it would be as easy for him to write to Sir George Beaumont as to take his food when he was hungry or his repose when he was weary. But we suffer bad habits to grow upon us, and that has been the case with me, as you have had reason to find and forgive already. I cannot quit the subject without regretting that any weakness of mine should have prevented my hearing from you, which would always give me great delight, and though I cannot presume to say that I should be a *punctual* correspondent, I am sure I should not be insensible of your kindness, but should also do my best to deserve it.

A few days ago I received from Mr. Southey your very acceptable present of Sir Joshua Reynolds's Works, which, with the Life, I have nearly read through. Several of the Discourses I had read before, though never regularly together: they have very much added to the high opinion which I before entertained of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Of a great part of them, never having had

an opportunity of *studying* any pictures whatsoever, I can be but a very inadequate judge; but of such parts of the Discourses as relate to general philosophy, I may be entitled to speak with more confidence; and it gives me great pleasure to say to you, knowing your great regard for Sir Joshua, that they appear to me highly honourable to him. The sound judgment universally displayed in these Discourses is truly admirable,—I mean the deep conviction of the necessity of unwearied labour and diligence, the reverence for the great men of his art, and the comprehensive and unexclusive character of his taste. Is it not a pity, Sir George, that a man with such a high sense of the *dignity* of his art, and with such industry, should not have given more of his time to the nobler departments of painting? I do not say this so much on account of what the world would have gained by the superior excellence and interest of his pictures, though doubtless that would have been very considerable, but for the sake of example. It is such an animating sight to see a man of genius, regardless of temporary gains, whether of money or praise, fixing his attention solely upon what is intrinsically interesting and permanent, and finding his happiness in an entire devotion of himself to such pursuits as shall most ennoble human nature. We have not yet seen enough of this in modern times; and never was there a period in society when such examples were likely to do more good than at present. The industry and love of truth which distinguish Sir Joshua's mind are most admirable; but he appears to me to have lived too much for the age in which he lived, and the people among whom he lived, though this in an infinitely less degree than his friend Burke, of whom Goldsmith said, with such truth, long ago, that—

Born for the universe, he narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.¹

I should not have said thus much of Reynolds, which I have not said without pain, but because I have so great a respect for his character, and because he lived at a time when, being the first Englishman distinguished for excellence in the higher department of painting, he had the field fairly open for him to have

¹ *Retaliation*, ll. 31–2.

given an example, upon which all eyes needs must have been fixed, of a man preferring the cultivation and exertion of his own powers in the highest possible degree to any other object of regard. My writing is growing quite illegible. I must therefore either mend it, or throw down the pen.

How sorry we all are under this roof that we cannot have the pleasure of seeing you and Lady Beaumont down this summer! The weather has been most glorious, and the country, of course, most delightful. Our own valley in particular was last night, by the light of the full moon, and in the perfect stillness of the lake, a scene of loveliness and repose as affecting as was ever beheld by the eye of man. We have had a day and a half of Mr. Davy's company at Grasmere, and no more: he seemed to leave us with great regret, being post-haste on his way to Edinburgh. I went with him to Paterdale, on his road to Penrith, where he would take coach. We had a deal of talk about you and Lady Beaumont: he was in your debt a letter, as I found, and exceedingly sorry that he had not been able to get over to see you, having been engaged at Mr. Coke's sheep-shearing, which had not left him time to cross from the Duke of Bedford's to your place. We had a very pleasant interview, though far too short. He is a most interesting man, whose views are fixed upon worthy objects.

That Loughrigg Tarn, beautiful pool of water as it is, is a perpetual mortification to me when I think that you and Lady Beaumont were so near having a summer-nest there. This is often talked over among us; and we always end the subject with a heigh ho! of regret. But I must think of concluding. My sister thanks Lady Beaumont for her last letter, and will write to her in a few days; but I must say to her myself how happy I was to hear that her sister had derived any consolation from Coleridge's poems and mine. I must also add how much pleasure it gives me that Lady Beaumont is so kindly, so affectionately disposed to my dear and good sister, and also to the other unknown parts of my family. Could we but have Coleridge back among us again! There is no happiness in this life but in intellect and virtue. Those were very pretty verses which Lady Beaumont sent; and we were much obliged to her for them.

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What shocking bad writing I have sent you ; I don't know [how] it is, but [it] seems as if I could not write any better.

Farewell. Believe me, with the sincerest love and affection for you and Lady Beaumont,

Yours,

Wm. Wordsworth.

MS. 178. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere 25th July 1804

My dear Madam

My Brother and Sister join their best thanks with mine for your kind offer of standing Godmother to their next infant. This proof of the affectionate interest with which you regard our family has given us all the most sincere pleasure, and proud indeed shall we be to avail ourselves of the privilege of insuring to the little helpless creature such a Friend as you are. If it be a Girl (which we wish it may be) it is to be called Dorothy. Mrs Coleridge exclaims against the name, but my Brother will have it so, and indeed he is so much attached to the *name*, the word, that I have got over my dislike of it, and do not dispute against it with my Sister and him, though I should not like that the Child of any other persons should be saddled with such a name for my sake. How I wish that it might have so happened that you yourself could have been present at the Christening! It will be, as is most frequently the custom here, at about the end of the month, the first time its Mother goes to Church. I shall (as there is no chance of your being here) take upon myself the office of promising in your stead, and I trust there will be a blessing upon my endeavours to assist its Mother in rendering it a fit object of your love, healthy in body and mind. Johnny has indeed done credit to our nursing. We have literally been his sole nurses for we had no servant to assist us in bearing him about, the old woman who then lived with us being quite unfit to do it. He can now run in the garden and go up and down stairs by himself—this is very comfortable for us—I do not know what we should have done with two Babies in arms though we have a strong young woman in place of our old one. Mrs Coleridge

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arrived here on Sunday afternoon with all the children, but she was taken away from us yesterday morning by Dr and Mrs Crompton of Liverpool who are going to spend a few days at Keswick, and will bring her back to Grasmere. She has left the children with us. Hartley and Derwent are quite well, but poor Sara is tormented with the nettle-rash which disturbs her sleep at nights, otherwise she is healthy—Yet such a little Fairy! a spirit! a thing that hardly seems to touch the earth as she skims along, though occasionally a little Vixen too, in action and voice;—and look, if it were not for her soft blue eyes. Johnny and she were bitter enemies at first, but now they can agree very well together, for a few minutes, can run about in a friendly way till something takes their fancies which both cannot have, and *she* squalls and *he* roars, and we are obliged to part them by force.

When I wrote to you last I forgot to speak of the Books which Sir George had been so kind as to send my Brother—at that time we had not received them, and my Brother not being at home, it happened in some way or other that I was not reminded of them at the time I was writing. He has since written to Sir George and informed him that the Books were safely arrived. By the Bye I must not (speaking of your kindnesses) forget to thank you and Sir George in my own person and for my own particular sake for the benefit and pleasure I have received from drinking of the Brown Stout, of which I take a certain quantity every day, and it seems to make me stronger and to do me good.

Mr Davy left Grasmere a week ago—he spent two days with my Brother—they were out of doors from morning till night, so that my Sister and I saw but little of him, but what we did see pleased us highly—and indeed *I* saw less of him than she did, for I was not perfectly well while he was here. He regretted very much that he had not been able to see you on his road into the North.

We are much indebted to you for your foresight and kind caution respecting the Ibbetsons—there is not however any reason to apprehend that they will come within reach of us, for Ibbetson, the Father, I believe, is proud and high-spirited: I know nothing ill of him except that he is addicted to drinking violently by fits, and I have been told that his conversation in

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the company of women is unbecoming and indecent. We have seen nothing of him for at least three years. At first when my Brother and I came to live here we called upon him and looked at his pictures—he was very civil—but we afterwards declined keeping up any acquaintance chiefly on account of the reports made to us by some of his irregular conversation etc. etc. If Miss Ibbetson should by accident fall in our way, we shall be happy to pay her any attention in our power, which we can do without danger of being forced into a connection with the rest of the family, but I do not think it is likely we shall see her.

We have heard nothing of Coleridge and it is a long time since he wrote to any of his Friends; we begin to be anxious—you may depend upon it, the very day we receive any news of him I will impart it to you. I have got a miserable hea[dache] which quite stupifies me, therefore I must conclude, but let me beg and entreat that you will never more talk of *troubling* me with your letters. I wish I could fully express the pleasure which I and those with whom I live have received from them and I am sure I should hear no more of it. You have shewn me how very kind your nature is by a hundred things but by none more than the readiness with which you have replied to my letters and the overflowing affection with which you have spoken in them of our Friend Coleridge, therefore they must needs be prized by me. I do not ask you to write to me either soon or often, but at all times I shall be most happy to hear from you, and you will allow me to add that I think myself honoured by your having chosen to write to me. Do again excuse my villainous pen, paper, and ink—I have written without table with my writing-box upon my knee out of pure unwillingness to move. I confess it may seem that I ought to have taken more pains, but it will at least be a proof to you that I feel no ceremony between us, but write as to an old acquaintance.

My Brother and Sister send their kind remembrances to Sir George and yourself—Believe me, my dear Madam,

affectionately yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Coleridge and Mrs Coleridge have often spoken to me of your Sister and interested me very much about her. You can hardly

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think how much I was delighted that my Brother's and our Friend's poems should have given her so great pleasure in her Banishment.

We were much pleased with the little poem you were so good as to send us.

Address: Lady Beaumont, near Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS. 179. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

M(—) G(—) K(—)

Grasmere, Friday, August 31, 1804.

Dear Sir George,

Wednesday last, Mrs. Coleridge, as she may, perhaps, herself have informed you or Lady Beaumont, received a letter from Coleridge. I happened to be at Keswick when it arrived; and she has sent it over to us to-day. I will transcribe the most material parts of it, first assuring you, to remove anxiety on your part, that the contents are we think upon the whole, promising. He begins thus (date, June 5. 1804, Tuesday noon; Dr Stoddart's, Malta):—'I landed in more than usual health in the harbour of Valetta, about four o'clock, Friday afternoon, April 18. Since then I have been waiting day after day for the departure of Mr. Laing, tutor of the only child of Sir A. Ball, our civil governor who is to return to England with young Ball by the very first opportunity, means to make Keswick on his way to Scotland, and will take for me Letters to Greeta Hall, Grasmere, and for Sir George Beaumont and Lady B.—but an opportunity offers of sending these overland by Messina and Naples, and I gladly avail myself of it, and shall send off this Letter with fervent prayers for its safe arrival, chiefly because a report spread through our Convoy, that the Gentleman the Passenger on board the Speedwell had died, Wednesday April 9th.' He goes on and says that they stayed five days at Gibraltar and lost their fair wind, their after voyage to Malta was storm that carried away their main yard &c., long dead calms and light varying winds. They were 40 days including their stay at Gibraltar in making their voyage.

He then gives a most melancholy account of an illness which

held him during the whole of his voyage from Gibraltar to Malta except the last four or five days, a languor and oppression, and rejection of food, accompanied with a dangerous constipation, which compelled the Captain to hang out signals of distress to the Commodore for a surgeon to come on board. He was relieved from this at last after undergoing the most excruciating agonies, with the utmost danger of an inflammation in the bowels.—All this appears to have been owing to his not having been furnished with proper opening medicines. The first week after his landing he was uncommonly well, but was afterwards seized with a fever which left him very low. He ends what relates to his health with saying that he is better on the whole, and that the only thing alarming in his case is a constant oppression in his breathing, the immediate cause of which is flatulence. He adds that the heat intense as it is does not oppress him and that he is going to Sicily in a fortnight.—This account I consider on the whole as favourable as it is manifest that the obstruction in the bowels, which would, as it seems, have cost him his life but for the timely aid of the surgeon was entirely owing to a want of proper opening medicines; and the fever on his arrival is nothing more than what few I believe escape on their first arrival, in such a hot place at that season of the year. The difficulty in breathing I trust will soon disappear.

His letter is long and other parts of it would have been *entertaining* to you, but what I have transcribed I am sure is the part which will interest you most.—With us you will wait impatiently for the arrival of Mr. Laing and further accounts.

My sister has to thank Lady Beaumont for a Letter; but she is at present unable to write, from a violent inflammation in her eyes, which I hope is no more than the complaint going about: but as she has lately been over-fatigued, and is in other respects unwell, I am not without fear that the indisposition in her eyes may last some time. As soon as she is able she will do herself the pleasure of writing to Lady Beaumont. Mrs. Wordsworth and Lady B.'s little god-daughter are both doing very well. Had the child been a boy, we should have persisted in our right to avail ourselves of Lady Beaumont's goodness in offering to stand sponsor for it. The name of *Dorothy*, obsolete as it is now

grown, had been so long devoted in my own thoughts to the first daughter that I might have, that I could not break this promise to myself—a promise in which my wife participated; though the name of *Mary*, to my ear the most musical and truly English in sound we have, would have been most welcome to me, including, as it would, Lady Beaumont and its mother. This last sentence, though in a letter to you, Sir George, is intended for Lady Beaumont.

I was much gratified by your kind letter. I am naturally slow in forming new attachments and wish that those about me should be so too, thinking it always the safer side to err upon. I had therefore, too, some kind of reason to apprehend that our strong desire to connect ourselves more nearly in friendship with yourself and Lady Beaumont, as it was deviation from our general conduct might be not altogether without impropriety. It appears that you on your part have had these apprehensions. I trust we are on both sides blameless. At any rate we must have been utterly insensible to every amiable quality and to every species of delicate attention to ourselves, and to one whom we love as dearly as ourselves, if I and mine had not felt irresistible drawings towards you and Lady B. There can be no valuable friendship where the parties are not mutually capable of instructing and delighting each other; I am sure that you and I have both lived long enough to be convinced of this truth, these qualities I have found in you and Lady Beaumont, and if I had not confidence that I am in part capable of repaying what I received I should not venture to seek your society as I have done, being sure that between persons entirely unequal in mental endowments and accomplishments, ‘no society (as Milton expresses it) can consist nor harmony or true delight’.¹

When I ventured to express my regret at Sir Joshua Reynolds giving so much of his time to portrait painting and to his friends, I did not mean to recommend absolute solitude and seclusion from the world as an advantage to him or anybody else. I think it a great evil; and indeed, in the case of a painter, frequent intercourse with the living world seems absolutely necessary to keep the mind in health and vigour. I spoke, in some respects,

¹ *P. L.* viii. 383.

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in compliment to Sir Joshua Reynolds, feeling deeply, as I do, the power of his genius, and loving passionately the labours of genius in every way in which I am capable of comprehending them. Mr. Malone in the account prefixed to the *Discourses* tells us that Sir Joshua generally passed the time from eleven till four every day in portrait painting. This it was that grieved me, as a sacrifice of great things to little ones.

It will give me great pleasure to hear from you at your leisure. I am anxious to know that you are satisfied with the site and intended plan of your House. I suppose no man ever built a house without finding, when it was finished, that something in it might have been better done. *Internal* architecture seems to have arrived at great excellence in England; but, I don't know how it is, I scarcely ever see the *outside* of a new house that pleases me. But I must break off. Believe me, with best remembrances from my wife and sister to yourself and Lady Beaumont, yours, with the greatest respect and regard,

W. Wordsworth.

My poetical labours have been entirely suspended during the last two months. I am most anxious to return to them. The porter proves most excellent and has been of great service to us.

180. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

C(—) K(—)

Grasmere, September 8th. [1804]

You will be glad to hear that I have been busily employed lately. I wrote one book of *The Recluse*, nearly 1000 lines, then had a rest. Last week began again, and have written 300 more. I hope all tolerably well, and certainly with good views. . . .

My sister received Lady Beaumont's letter from Mulgrave last night. She would have written ere this, but knew not what to say about Coleridge, waiting in hope that we might have letters from him that would be more satisfactory. I am glad Wilkie is with you.¹ Pray remember me to him. . . .

¹ David Wilkie (1785–1841), the famous genre painter. His early reputation was gained in Edinburgh, where he studied till 1804, at the Trustees Academy of Design: he started his career in London in 1805. Apparently

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I have been at Whitby several times. Once in particular I remember seeing a most extraordinary effect from the pier, produced by the bold and ragged shore in a misty and showery day. The appearance was as of a set of huge faces in profile, one behind the other, with noses of prodigious prominence. The whole was very fantastic, and yet grand. . . .

MS.

181. W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere Saturday Sep^t 22 [1804]

My dear Richard,

I should have drawn the same conclusions which you have done from Mr Wordsworth's¹ letter, which is a very Jesuitical performance. As to your apprehensions of delay and trouble I can only say that I beg you would put any disagreeable part of the business on my shoulders; it must be gotten through while you are in the Country, and therefore no unpleasant feeling of giving pain to Mr R. W. shall prevent me from pushing him to the point at once.—If we be vigorous there can be no pretext for delay which we may not sweep away immediately.

We have yet had no tidings of John ourselves, but thanks to Mrs Wordsworth² we are acquainted with his good prospects.

We are all well. Dorothy's cough almost quite gone, and Mary and the children do very well.

We want much to see you here. I do not think myself that the business will ever be settled but by arbitration and therefore sincerely wish that Mr Huddleston's and [?]'s exhortations should be followed up. At present however what we have chiefly to do is to exact of Mr Wordsworth a fresh statement of the account within a limited time, so as to allow no corner to creep out at.

I am dear Brother

Your affectionate B^r

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr R. Wordsworth.

he visited Sir G. B. on the way and Sir George was one of the first and warmest of his patrons. W. must have met him in 1801, when visiting Edinburgh to be present at Montagu's wedding.

¹ Robinson W.

² The wife of Captain Wordsworth.

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MS. 182. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere September¹ 23rd 1804

My dear Lady Beaumont

I should have written to you immediately if but half a dozen lines to acknowledge the receipt of the ten pound Note if you had not taken the precaution of sending it in two letters, and therefore could have no doubt about its safety. We received the letters duly, and we all join in thanking you for your kindness. I must inform you how we have pondered and deliberated over your gift; for we have not disposed of it in the way which I suppose has been usual on like occasions. We have no nursemaid for the children, nor have we had any nurse to take care of my Sister during her confinement. I was the attendant upon the little Baby, and Sara Hutchinson came over to assist me in attending upon its Mother, therefore there seemed to be no one but the infant your Goddaughter who had any claim upon this kindness of yours. We have thought of many plans and at last have settled with most delight upon one which we trust will be a lasting memorial of you—it is this—that we shall lay out the money in planting a small plot of ground which is to be Dorothy's Grove, near our own house wherever we make our final settlement—the trees are to be the Child's, her own. They will grow up *with her* at first, as brethren, with whom she may measure and compare herself from year to year, but if Sun and wind prosper them they will be a shelter and a shade for her by the time she has lived twenty years, and who knows but they may be the nursery of her tenderest and best thoughts!

My Sister is quite recovered, and makes an excellent nurse to your little Dorothy. She has no other food but from her breast. Miss Hutchinson supplied your place last Sunday. She left us this morning along with two Relations of my Sister's who came to the Christening and have stayed with us ever since. Their presence and the bustle of so many people in our small house have prevented my writing for the last ten days, for my eyes ha[ve] been and are much better, though I am afraid of using

¹ Misdated by D. as Aug. 23rd. Little Dorothy W. was only born on Aug. 16th, moreover the post-mark of the letter is Sept. 28.

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them. Miss Sara Hutchinson desired me to make her most respectful remembrances to you, and her acknowledgements of your kindness in taking so much interest about her.

I have now to speak of poor Coleridge, from whom we have ourselves received a short letter. It is the first that has reached us, but alas! the third he had sent off so we may guess that he has written more than once to you and others of his Friends. The letter is mainly filled with lamentations that he had received no letters from *any Body*—a trunk had arrived which he had opened with the full confidence of finding packets from us all, and it contained nothing but a parcel of German Almanacks!!! What he says upon the state of his health is on the whole very favourable, though he adds that he seems to be well rather from the absence of diseasing causes than from an increase of constitutional strength. He was living as comfortably as possible in such a desert as Malta; (at Sir Alexander Ball's country house) and his expenses were very small, (no inconsiderable source of comfort to him, anxious as he always is about working and doing something when expenses stare him in the face). He intended going to Sicily the week after he wrote—(his letter is dated the fourth of August) and might probably stay till the first week in October. I will give you one extract—after speaking of the heat he says 'Still, however, though I bear these summer months so well any cool, clouded, blowing day gives me manifest strength and spirits, and I have therefore much to hope and with much reason, from the late autumn and winter, when the weather is by confession of all perfectly divine. O that it were only a more beautiful country!—' My eyes ache very much so I must conclude. I have written as fast as possible for their sakes; so excuse blunders—but that indeed is only as heretofore, for when I have not weak eyes I have always some reason or other, some feeling or disposition which makes me write letters or any manuscript which I am not *copying* in a careless slovenly manner—in this I am very like my Brother William.

We all unite in kindest remembrances. My Brother thanks Sir George for his letter and his friendly invitation to Grosvenor Square; he intends writing himself in a few days and will then explain what prospect he has or may have of availing himself of

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Sir George's kindness—Adieu, my dear Madam, believe me your affectionate Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Your Goddaughter grows a very pretty Baby—She is her Father's darling. I think he is more tender over her than he ever was over her Brother. She wins her way into all our hearts, though at first we were often hurt to think that she did not seem so much prized among us as John was in the first fortnight of his life. Now however we make all up—but Johnny is very jealous, and often gives her a blow that makes her cry—indeed he is so boisterous that we are obliged to keep constant watch over him when he is near her ; he improves very much in strength, but he is not near so handsome as he was. These are nursery tales—I will ask you to excuse them—I only prattle in this way to those I love, and who I believe love me and those I love.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Dunmow, Essex.

MS. *183. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere—October 7th—1804

My dear Lady Beaumont

I received your interesting letter on Friday evening in the very moment that I was thinking of you, having laid aside my pen which I had taken up with an intention of writing to you, but I had been writing all the afternoon and was forced at last to yield to a bad headache and a threatening from my eyes. Your letter for a time chased away my uncomfortable bodily feelings. My heart was full of you and your dear Sister, and I was about to write a whole sheet-full instantly ; but again the headache returned worse than ever and I was forced again to give it up. So it is always with me ; any strong excitement cures my diseases for a time, but if I am well as surely brings them on. How very good you were to copy so much of your Sister's letter ! but it must have been a pleasant office, therefore I should do you wrong to say you had given yourself trouble for my gratification, or if I felt any pain in having taken up so much of your time. It will be a happy day for my Sister and me when

we see you at Grasmere or wherever it may be: every letter I receive from you makes me feel more deeply than before how much we have lost in never having seen you while you were so near us; the activity of your kindness towards us, and above all that unequivocal proof of your affection, your wish to make us love what *you* love, and your faith that we shall do so, have made me feel as if you ought to be a sharer in my pleasures when I am most happy. William could tell you how often when we have been in a beautiful place together, I have said to him: 'I wish we could bring Lady Beaumont hither.' I find I have called my Brother by his own familiar name—he is always so called by his particular friends, who have caught it from me, and I dare say that when Coleridge's heart has been opening out and he has been talking to you about him he may have made you know him by that name, and you would not perhaps stop at the word, William. We have been all of us deeply interested by your extracts from your Sister's letter. It is lamentable that she should be so divided from you; and kept by force from her own country. I am aware that from her excellent understanding and her great sensibility she must have many and deep pleasures which a common mind could not conceive; but so much the more must she often suffer from the same cause, and so much the greater is your loss. I hope you will from time to time speak to me about her, tell me about the chance of her returning to England, and anything that concerns her personal welfare. We have been shaping dreams within the last month in which she was an agent, and even wrote of them to Coleridge. We proposed to him that he should return by way of Switzerland, and with the help of your Sister seek out two cottages for us and his family in her neighbourhood, and that we should all meet him there. What do you say to taking a third? But alas! these things are to be guided [by] greater agents than we are. What is to become of Buonaparté? or when shall we be suffered again to pass quietly from place to place? We have had another letter from Coleridge, but as it was of a later [*sic*] date than the one we transcribed, and contained nothing new, we did not inform you of it, though he requested we would copy parts of it and send them to you. He desired us to direct to him under cover of his Excellency Sir

Alexander Ball, Governor of Malta. He writes as if his health were better, that is, as if he were seldom ill, but I do not think he seems to have any steady hope of being better except as long as he is out of the way of accidents; and his spirits seem to be languid. His returning to *live* in the North of England is quite out of the question, therefore we intend to keep ourselves unfettered here, ready to move to any place where he may chuse to settle with his family. We find ourselves sadly crowded in this small Cottage since the Birth of the little Girl, and we are looking about for another house, but we would only take it from year to year that we may have nothing to bind us down. We cannot, however, hear of a house, and though we are very industrious inquirers, yet I think we are half glad of it, for though when we have any single person staying with us we are forced to wish ourselves in another place, when we are alone we gather ourselves together, and looking round our lowly sitting-room we feel as if we could never find another home. My Sister is perfectly well. We seized the first fine autumnal days (my Brother and I) after her recovery, and took our Car to Keswick with an intention of proceeding immediately to Ennerdale and Wasdale, but the Southneys and Mrs Coleridge and Mrs Lovel went with us to Buttermere and we returned to Keswick. The next day William and I set off on our Tour. We passed over the mountains of Whinlatter along the Cockermouth Road, and through the Vale of Lorton, and by Loweswater to Ennerdale. You must have crossed Whinlatter and will recollect what a lovely and wild road it is among high mountains. One scene impressed me very much—there was neither stone fence nor hedge, nor any work of men but the Road for a considerable way before us between the hills, a mile-stone and a wall upon the sloping ground at the foot of the mountain built by the shepherds in the form of a cross as a shelter for their sheep—it is strange that so simple a thing should be of so much importance, but the mountains and the very sky above them, the solitary mountain-vale, all seemed to have a reference to that rude shelter—it was the very soul of the place. We dropped down soon after into the fertile vale of Lorton, and went to visit a Yewtree which is the Patriarch of Yewtrees, green and flourishing in very old age—the largest tree

I ever saw. We have many large ones in this Country, but I have never yet seen one that would not be but as a Branch of this. When you come we must take you to it. I had never been at Ennerdale and I was very anxious to see every mountain top for the sake of old Walter Ewbank,¹ and his Grandsons, but the mists had obstinately taken possession of them, and it rained all the time we were there. At Wasdale we did better and here I longed for a small share of the powers of Sir George Beaumont to have brought away a sketch of some of the scenes we saw. Wasdale (I include both the Vale and lake) is exceedingly wild but in entire simplicity, so that a person like me (knowing nothing about the art) might suppose that with half a dozen strokes of the pencil a character might be given of the place—the mountains are large and steep—in great masses—the borders of the lake on one side without any wood, on the other nearly so. We were very hospitably entertained at the house of a *statesman* at Wasdale head, for there is no inn here, and the next day we went to his Cousin's who keeps an ale-house at Seathwaite in the vale of Duddon, one of the most romantic of all our vales, and one of the wildest but in perfect contrast to Wasdale. In Duddon vale hills, rocks, bushes and trees are striving together for mastery, green fields and patches of green are to be spied wherever the eye turns with their snug cottages half-hidden by the rocks, or so like them in colour that you hardly know rock from cottage. We were received by the good people of the publick house with the same hospitality as by their kinsfolk in Wasdale. We said to each other that we here saw what the natives used to be in this country before it was so much visited. In the morning we asked for our Bill, which I will copy for you, as it is a curiosity—Observe that we had Tea Supper and Breakfast—Excellent cream and delicious bread and butter—broiled Char, fresh out of the Tarn to supper—Tea 1^s—Supper 1^s—Breakfasts 1^s—Horse 1^s—ale 6^d—Total 4^s 6^d! I did not mention, when I was speaking of your Sister, that my Brother has never seen the River she describes, but her description is so intelligible that I can almost fancy I see it as it is. I had intended telling you of some reports which go about to the prejudice

¹ Walter Ewbank: *v. The Brothers* (Oxf. W., p. 95).

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of Mary Ibbetson's Mother-in-Law, but I have not room for particulars. I should be very glad to hear that the young woman (of whom by the Bye we hear nothing unfavourable, but quite the contrary) were returning to your care, or at least likely to leave her Father's house soon. Do not make mention of my having spoken about it. I never thanked you for your prescriptions for my eyes. I did not make use of either of them because I thought they were getting better, but they are not well yet. We all beg to be most kindly remembered to Sir George. Believe me, my dear Lady Beaumont, your affectionate friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

We have received great pleasure from that poem of Cowper which you mentioned to us. I believe that it did my Brother some good, and set him on to writing after a pause sooner than he would otherwise have done.

We have seen a Mr Eddridge¹ who talked with us about you—he seems a very pleasing man—Wm wished we could have seen more of him—he was much delighted with Sir G.'s drawing of Applethwaite.

I must tell you that next to Mary Margaret has long been our favourite name. It is of the right English sound, and now we like it the better for your sake.

Grasmere. October 10th. I have not had an opportunity of sending off my letter and now I have to tell you a piece of bad news: that Mr Jackson has sold Greta Hall, and Mrs Coleridge must quit it at Whitsuntide—poor woman. She is in sad trouble about it as well she may. There is however one good in this evil! It will loosen Coleridge from this country.

Tell me if you have been able to read my scraps of writing—indeed this letter, I fear, will not be worth the trouble of decyphering.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Dunmow, Essex.

¹ Henry Edridge (b. 1769; A.R.A. 1820; d. 1821), a miniature painter, and friend of Sir G. B. He made a pencil drawing of W. in the following year.

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MS.
K(—)

184. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Grasmere about the
19th or 14th October [1804]

My dear Friend,

Our dear little Dorothy was two months old on Thursday, and I have not once written to you since her Birth. This is very strange and I could almost say very unkind, for assuredly my silence has given you pain, though I know full well (and you know it too) that there has been no unkindness in my heart, and I have suffered deeply for my procrastinating temper. I will not tell you how it has happened (and indeed I *could* not, for I think I might tell of a hundred things which I blame for it) but set forward as if I had done no wrong, relying on your love for me for entire forgiveness. We expected Mr Clarkson every day the week after he parted from us, and should have been most glad to have seen him again though we had even kept him one day from you, for I am sure you would have been more happy if he had come fresh from us. I trust you are now comfortably settled for the winter at your Father's house and that you continue to improve in your health. Do write to us as soon as you can to tell us how you are and how your husband bore his journey—he had a very bad cold when he was with us. Mr Clarkson will have told you about the Children—Johnny was not well when he was here, looked badly, and was very cross, but he is greatly improved in all respects, being able to endure contradiction patiently though he is as lively as ever. A short time after Dorothy's Birth, being somewhat put to fend for himself he was almost unendurable he screamed so much—he has a very passionate temper, but I hope, he is so tractable compared with what he was, that he will soon be as little troublesome as a child of his age can be—he is wondrously stout and strong. When he looks pale we think him like your Tom, and certainly he is more like him than any other child though he has a large head and Tom a small one. Mary recovered wonderfully after her lying-in, but she is not so well as I could wish her to be, at present. She has a bad appetite and is very thin which is disheartening to us when we see her suckle the Child. She is taking

Bark and Steel which as they seem to agree with her I hope will do her good. Sara H was with us from the day after Dorothy's Birth till the christening was over and Miss Monkhouse and Mary M¹ came over on the occasion and stayed a week so we were indeed a housefull, and began to be quite sickened at our small dwelling, we have sought after another but cannot meet with one, but indeed we are glad of the disappointment, for as we shall not have any or at least much company this winter we think we can be both quiet and comfortable here till the summer and before that time we know not what changes may happen. Coleridge may be about to return and he will certainly not settle in the North, he *cannot* do it now, for Mr Jackson has sold Greta Hall to Mr White that worthless Fellow who brought his wife with him and a *Mistress* in Boy's clothes. Mr White enters at Whitsuntide so poor Mrs Coleridge will be turned adrift—she is in great trouble about it as well she may, and Coleridge will be heart struck at the thought of no more returning to his old Books in their old Book-case looking to Skiddaw, his study, his study fireside, Newlands and Borrowdale all taken from him, for there is no such situation, no such prospect any where as from his study window. Mrs C will try and get a furnished house, or lodgings till C's return and then some place must be sought out. Mr Clarkson spoke of the Cheapness of land in Kent and it is a dry County—perhaps we might all settle there, and you might have a little summer Cottage near us. But oh my dear Friend it will be a hard thing when we leave these dear Mountains without having some home here to draw us back again from time to time. As long as Sara and Tom Hutchinson are at Park House there will be one Hold² for us, but their stay seems to be very uncertain, as I do not think that Tom is entirely satisfied with his Farm. My Brother Richard has been nearly two months in the North but we have only had him here a few days and now

¹ Mary M. (1787–1858) sister of Thomas M. (*v. note to next letter*). In 1812 she married Thomas Hutchinson. The Miss M. here referred to was Mary's aunt.

² Hold: cf. Oxf. W., p. 218.

Dear Child of Nature, let them rail!
There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbour and a hold.

I am afraid we shall hardly see him again for more than a day—he is hurried back again to London and has still much business to do in the North before he goes. John is in great spirits. Through the interest of Mr Wilberforce he has got what he calls ‘a better Voyage’ that is he does not go to China direct as before, but I have forgotten what is to be his destination—he is afraid he cannot come and see us before he sails. You will have heard of Christopher’s marriage. Richard thinks there will be near 2,000£ for each of us younger Children when our affairs are settled—this will be a good thing.

Dorothy is a very sweet child, a *female* Johnny exceedingly like him only as much of the girl in every look and feature as he was of the Boy, and not near so large though a stout child. She is her father’s darling, his little pet, and yet he seems as fond of John as it is possible to be. Though Mary is evidently not so strong as she ought to be Dorothy thrives and is exceedingly healthy. William is quite well and goes on with his work again, but has had a long interception from summer Company, Mary’s confinement etc. etc. God be praised we are now quite alone and quiet. William and I have been on a Tour to Ennerdale and Wasdale since Sara left us and at our return we found Mr Montagu and George Dyer.¹ They lodged at the Inn and we have not seen much of Dyer. Busy however as we have been kept with company we had no sorrow about their coming, nothing but pleasure—Mrs Lovel² too has been with us—she came unexpectedly and her we were very glad to see—she is an interesting woman though of a fretful unhappy temper. She stayed with us four days. My dear Friend I have only talked about ourselves and about ordinary things for it is so long since I have written to you that till I hear again from you I cannot write about what concerns you without so much uncertainty that it is painful to me. Heaven grant that you may be well! if you had been much worse we should certainly have heard. God bless you my very dear Friend, believe me ever more your faithful and affectionate
Dorothy Wordsworth.

¹ George Dyer (1755–1841), scholar and miscellaneous writer, a great friend of Lamb’s, and the G. D. of *Oxford in the Vacation*.

² Mrs. Lovell, sister to Mrs. Coleridge and Mrs. Southey.

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William and Mary send their most affectionate remembrances.
Again and Again God bless you. D. W.

Remember me kindly to your Father and your Brother Robert.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, at Mr Buck's, Bury, Suffolk.

MS. 185. D. W. to Richard W.

Keswick November 29th 1804

My dear Brother,

I have this day drawn upon you for 20£ in favor of Mr William Jackson or order—one month after date. I hope we shall not have occasion to draw again till we hear from you and know how our accounts stand, and how much we have a right to draw for in the regular way.

When I came from Grasmere on Monday Morning I had no thought of drawing on you; I came off at 5 minutes warning, so we had had no talk about it, but there are several small Bills to pay here which I thought it best to get done myself while I am here, and therefore I have drawn, as I had no other way of doing it. We have received Montagu's draft—it is at home untouched.

We are all well. We wish much to hear from you and John. I am staying with Mrs Southey. I accompanied her in a Chaise on Monday morning, she called at our house and persuaded me to come. We are all well. Give my kind love to John. Believe me my dear Richard your ever affectionate Sister,

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Mr Tom Monkhouse¹ of Penrith will be calling upon you some time or other for money to pay for some stockings he is to buy for William. He is the late Mr Monkhouse's son of Carlisle, afterwards of Penrith—he was at Grasmere about a month ago. I dated the draft *Grasmere* though drawn at Keswick this morning.

Address: Mr Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

¹ Thomas Monkhouse (1785–1825), M. W.'s first cousin. He went into business at Budge Row, London, and became a rich man, famous for his generous hospitality. He was keenly interested in literature and numbered among his friends and acquaintances Lamb, Coleridge, Kenyon, Moore, Haydon, and Crabb Robinson. W. W. spoke of him as one of his dearest friends, and Lamb referred to him as 'Wordsworth's noble-hearted kinsman'.

MS. 186. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

M(—) G(—) K(—) C(—)

Grasmere, Dec. 25th, 1804.

My dear Sir George,

Long since ought I to have thanked you for your last affectionate Letter ; but I knew how indulgent you were and therefore fell, I wont say more easily, but surely with far less pain to myself into my old trick of procrastination.

I was deeply sensible of your kindness in inviting me to Grosvenor Square, and then felt and still feel a strong inclination to avail myself of the opportunity of cultivating your friendship and that of Lady Beaumont, and of seeing a little of the world at the same time. But as the wish is strong, there are also strong obstacles against it: first, though I have lately been tolerably industrious, I am far behindhand with my appointed work ; and next, my nervous system is so apt to be deranged by going from home that I am by no means sure that I should not be so much of a dependent invalid, I mean a person obliged to manage himself, as to make it absolutely improper for me to obtrude myself where neither my exertions of mind or body could enable me to be tolerable company. I say nothing of my family because a short absence would be abundantly recompensed by the pleasure of a 'sweet return'.¹ At all events, I must express my sincere thanks for your kindness and the pleasure which I received from your letter breathing throughout such favourable dispositions, I may say, such earnest friendship towards me.

I think we are completely agreed upon the subject of Sir Joshua, that is, we both regret that he did not devote more of his time to the higher branches of the Art, and further, I think you join with me in lamenting to a certain degree at least that he did not live more to himself. I have since read the rest of his *Discourses*, with which I have been greatly pleased, and wish most heartily that I could have an opportunity of seeing in your company your own collection of pictures and some others in town, Mr. Angerstein's² for instance, to have pointed out to me

¹ *Paradise Lost*, ix. 250.

² John Julius Angerstein (1735–1823), a wealthy merchant and amateur of the fine arts. Chiefly owing to the advocacy of Sir G. B. his collection was bought to form the nucleus of the National Gallery.

some of those finer and peculiar beauties of Painting which I am afraid I shall never have an occasion of becoming sufficiently familiar with pictures to discover of myself. There is not a day in my life when I am at home in which that exquisite little drawing of yours of Appplethwaite does not affect me with a sense of harmony and grace which I cannot describe. Mr. Edridge, an artist whom you know, saw this drawing along with a Mr. Duppa,¹ another artist, who published *Heads*² from Raphael and Michael Angelo; and they were both most enthusiastic in their praise of it, to my great delight. By the by, I thought Mr. Edridge a man of very mild and pleasing manners, and as far as I could judge, of delicate feelings, in the province of his Art. Duppa is publishing a life of Michael Angelo, and I received from him a few days ago two proof-sheets of an Appendix which contains the poems of M. A., which I shall read, and translate one or two of them, if I can do it with decent success. I have peeped into the sonnets, and they do not appear at all unworthy of their great Author.

You will be pleased to hear that I have been advancing with my work: I have written upwards of 2,000 verses during the last ten weeks. I do not know if you are exactly acquainted with the plan of my poetical labour: it is twofold; first, a Poem, to be called *The Recluse*; in which it will be my object to express in verse my most interesting feelings concerning Man, Nature, and society; and next, a Poem (in which I am at present chiefly engaged) on my earlier life or the growth of my own mind taken up upon a large scale. This latter work I expect to have finished before the month of May; and then I purpose to fall with all my might on the former, which is the chief object upon which my thoughts have been fixed these many years. Of this poem, that of 'The Pedlar', which Coleridge read you, is part, and I may have written of it altogether about 2,000 lines. It will consist, I hope, of about 10 or 12 thousand.

¹ Richard Duppa (1770–1831), artist and author, studied at Rome and was esteemed an excellent draughtsman. He published *A selection of Twelve Heads from the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo* (in 1801) and *Heads from the Fresco Pictures of Raffaele in the Vatican* in 1803. His *Life and Letters of M. A.* appeared in 1806. For W.'s translations v. Oxf. W., pp. 256–7.

² For *Heads* all previous copies of the letter have *Hints*, but *Heads* is what W. meant to write.

DECEMBER 1804

May we not hope for the pleasure of seeing you and Lady Beaumont down here next Summer? I flatter myself that Coleridge will then be return'd, and though we would not [on] any account that he should fix himself in this rainy part of England, yet perhaps we may have the happiness of meeting all together for a few weeks. We have lately built in our little rocky orchard a little circular Hut, lined with moss, like a wren's nest, and coated on the outside with heath, that stands most charmingly, with several views from the different sides of it, of the Lake, the Valley and the Church—the latter sadly spoiled lately by being white-washed. The little retreat is most delightful, and I am sure you and Lady Beaumont would be highly pleased with it. Coleridge has never seen it. What a happiness would it be to us to see him there, and entertain you all next Summer in our homely way under its shady thatch. I will copy a dwarf inscription which I wrote for it the other day, before the building was entirely finished, which indeed it is not yet.

No whimsy of the purse is here,
No Pleasure-House forlorn;
Use, comfort, do this roof endear;
A tributary Shed to chear
The little Cottage that is near,
To help it and adorn.

I hope the young Roscius,¹ if he go on as he has begun, will rescue the English theatre from the infamy that has fallen upon it, and restore the reign of good sense and Nature. From what you have seen, Sir George, how do you think he could manage a character of Shakespeare? Neither Selim nor Douglas requires much power; but even to perform them as he does talents and genius I should think must be necessary. I had very little hope,

¹ William H. W. Betty (1791–1874), a boy actor, who, after great success in Ireland and the English provinces in 1803–4, appeared at Covent Garden on 1 Dec. 1804 as Selim in John Brown's tragedy of *Barbarossa*, and on 10 Dec. in Home's *Douglas*. His Shakespearian parts were Hamlet and Prince Arthur, to which he added Richard III and Macbeth in the following year. The furore he created was so great that at Covent Garden, when he played Selim, the military were called out to preserve order, and when he played Hamlet Pitt adjourned the House of Commons that members might attend the performance. In 1808 he left the stage, reappearing in 1812; but he retired again in 1824 with an ample fortune.

DECEMBER 1804

I confess, thinking it very natural that a theatre which had brought a dog upon the stage as a principal performer would catch at a wonder whatever shape it might put on.

We have had no tidings of Coleridge these several months. He spoke of papers which he had sent by private hands, none of which we have received. It must be most criminal neglect somewhere if the fever be suffered to enter Malta. Farewell, and believe me, my dear Sir George, your affectionate and sincere friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Dunmow, Essex.

MS. *187. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere—Christmas Day [1804]

My dear Lady Beaumont

Not a day has passed for these many weeks past in which I have not thought of you more or less, and with frequent wishes and resolves to write to you, but my employments the day through and a procrastinating disposition have kept me silent thus long. Our poor little John sprained his ankle five weeks ago, was unable for a fortnight to set his foot on the ground, and has only now just got the use of both his limbs. During all this time we have had to nurse him like a Baby, and, what is worst of all, he is made a pet, and a little hanger-on about his Mother and me, so that whenever we leave him he cries, which bad habit will make him yet engross much of our time, and I think he will scarcely be fairly weaned from us till warm weather invites him out of doors. Your letter reached me about an hour ago, and I can no longer help writing.

You must have guessed that in our retirement we have wished for some account of the wonderful Boy from some one on whose judgement we could rely, and that we, with all those who do not love wonders better than anything else, have disbelieved and doubted. Your letter came just when we were ready to receive the truth, having lately heard so much as to convince us that he must be a most extraordinary creature, and therefore your kindness was doubly felt and doubly welcome. Though your account of the Child is perfectly intelligible, and though I believe

CHRISTMAS DAY 1804

that he performed those two characters of Douglass and Selim to perfection, yet I cannot conceive it possible that he should represent the complex characters of Shakespeare; for how can he understand them? I do not think that there is any thing in the character of Douglass (I am not acquainted with the other play) which a Boy of great talents might not be able to comprehend and conceive, but yet there is something altogether puzzling, how can so much modesty and so much confidence and collectedness of mind coexist in such a young creature? That they do so exist, I am sure, for without both one and the other he could not be so exquisitely graceful. We all end our wonders and our discussions with wishing that we could but see him; if we were within 60 miles of London nothing should prevent us. Withal, I think of him, I scarce know why, with melancholy feelings, for he seems to walk among the Crowd of his admirers unsullied by praise; yet when I think of him tears often start into my eyes, and I am sure I could not see him come upon the stage without weeping, or deep sadness. How did you feel? I never heard of a very extraordinary child that lived to be a man; or at least the few that do live are either wasted by vanity, or their bodies and minds are enfeebled by too early and intense exercise of their faculties. My Brother vows that if the Boy grow up as he has begun he will write a play on purpose for him, God granting *him* also life and health for so great a work. Indeed the good effects that this Child may produce on the English theatre cannot be calculated. What a glorious thing if he should be the means of turning us from low buffoonery and pantomime back to our own great dramatic writers! independent of what may hereafter be done by others, who may attempt to write encouraged by a better taste.

We have now all the glory and stillness of winter about us—the night before last it was a silent frost, without a breath of wind and in the morning the Lake was frozen over—the mountains have a thin covering of snow which makes our white houses and white Church even look well, but it is a sad pity that the storms do not make a more successful war against whitewash, for though it is tolerable when there is any quantity of snow and by moonlight, at all other times the Church seems absolutely

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to disturb the proportions of the Vale by its starting forward, at least to us who have known it otherwise. By the Bye I must tell you that we have been busily employed about finishing a little hut or shed, a sort of larger Bird's-nest (for it is lined with moss) at the top of our orchard, a place for my Brother to retire to for quietness on warm days in winter, and for a pleasure-house, a little parlour, for all of us in summer—it is large enough for a large party to drink tea in. I dare say in warm weather we shall frequently scarcely come down even to dinner, it will be so cool a shade. Oh! my dear Lady Beaumont, how happy, how glad should we be to see you and dearest Coleridge with others whom we love seated upon that mossy cushion on some fine evening next summer! perhaps another Summer we may not be here, and my Sister and I look forward to seeing you in this country for the first time, as if it were the only natural means of bringing us together—but for these mountains we should have been entirely unknown to each other! Alas! we have had no letter from Coleridge. We are perplexed and distressed about him, and continually thinking of him in spite of our attempts to turn from the thought. We find our comfort here, that he is certainly at Malta, and that every caution will be used to keep the fever out of the Island, and in so small a place surely this may be done. I grieve for your anxiety and distress about your Sister, and for her sake I hate if possible more intensely that cruel and foolish Emperor.¹

My Sister has just come into the room, and told me that my Brother is writing to Sir George—he has long talked about it, and I dare say, like me, he could not help writing this afternoon he received so much pleasure from your letter, and was so glad to have your opinion and Sir George's of the young Roscius. We hear often from Mrs Coleridge—she is in very good health, but does not know what to think of the non-arrival of letters, and is very anxious. She and Derwent have been staying with Miss Sara Hutchinson at Park House. I was at Keswick with John during her absence (his Father and I went with him to consult the Surgeon). Hartley looked well and grows stronger, but Sara seemed puny, and was not so pretty or interesting as

¹ Napoleon declared Emperor of the French, May 8, 1804.

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when I saw her before. I always take the privilege of a Friend and write to you in haste, consequently my letters are scarcely legible—you have forgiven me before and will forgive again, remembering that it is natural to me to do everything as quick as I can. And at the same time I hope you will believe me that it is a proof of my affection for you and my confidence in your affection and kindness, that I do not do violence to my natural inclinations.

We will write as soon as ever we have any tidings of Coleridge.

I am glad that Mary Ibbetson has left this country and is again under your protection.

Adieu, my dear Friend, Believe me ever

faithfully and affectionately yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Dunmow, Essex.

188. W. W. to John W. and Richard W. with P.S. from D. W.

Grasmere. December 27, 1804.

My dear John,

When Coleridge went abroad he borrowed a hundred Pounds from Mr Sotheby which sum I was to pay for him last November. He fully expected to have remitted me money for this purpose, but I conjecture that communication with Malta has been stopped, as none of his Friends have had any tidings from him during the last three months; it therefore becomes my duty to remit this money to Sotheby; on which account I request you would have the goodness to call upon him at his house, or send some trusty person (he lives in Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square, but the number unfortunately I don't know, but I should suppose it would be easily found) to pay this money with about three quarters of a year interest, but I do not recollect to a week. In making this request I proceed on the supposition that it will be in your power to advance this money for me. If not Richard must supply it. I expect to be able to repay it from Coleridge in a month or two, or you may consider it as repaying part of your debt to me, if you like it better.

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We are all well. We have built a charming little Temple in the Orchard, a Moss hut that is, with delightful views of the Church, Lake, Valley etc, etc. Come and see it, do come and see it if only for a fortnight, and I am not positively sure, if that will be any temptation, but that I may return with you, as I have a pressing invitation to Sir George Beaumont's in Grosvenor Square. We long to see you, but we have given up the hope of hearing from you. Christopher has never written since his marriage; we heard from Priscilla the other day.

I have written some pretty good verses since I saw you which I should like to read you. Farewell—believe me your most affectionate Brother and Friend.

W. Wordsworth.

P.S. Will you also be so good as to have 10£ ready at Richard's Chambers to be paid to Mr Charles Lamb when he calls, it being a sum which he either has advanced or means to do for me for Books.

My dear Richd,

I have just had the Tax Gatherer with me; we should have less contribution to pay if Dorothy and I had the money, which I suppose you pay for in the funds or elsewhere, parcelled out between us. I am anxious that this should be done against the next assessment, therefore will you be so good as to furnish me with a statement so that this may be the most effectually done. Have you found time to get the papers ready for my uncle [?] Wordsworth?

Your affectionate Brother
W. W.

December 27

We are all well—with best love.

(D. writes)

William has desired me to remind you about sending the Morning Chronicles—we wish for them very much—God bless you, Kindest love to John.

Your affect^e Sister D. W.

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MS. 189. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Miss Sara Hutchinson's
Park House

January 5th—1805

My dear Friend

I hope that you have several days ago received my last letter. my Brother wrote at the same time to Sir George. You will have gathered from our letters that we are going on happily, and in our old way having got through poor John's¹ misfortune;—though our enjoyments are always damped by an inner sense of uncertainty respecting our beloved Friend, of whom we yet hear nothing. We should be truly miserable about him if we were not well assured that he must be at Malta, where my Brother says they may keep out the fever if they are not absolutely senseless. I received your letter the day before yesterday while we were on our road to Park house to visit Miss Hutchinson and her Brother. We came in the Irish Car, my Sister, Brother, the two children and myself, and Mr George Hutchinson was our Charioteer. It was a bold undertaking to which we were suddenly tempted by the delightfulness of the air and sunshine the day before. It was a keen frost and we had been taking our pleasure upon the ice, all the family, my Sister and I sitting upon chairs with the children on our knees, while my Brother and Mr H. in their skates drove us along. In the midst of our good spirits we resolved to pluck up courage and, if the next day were fine, to venture over Kirkstone. We had a prosperous journey as for our greatest care and concern the children, but both the Mother and I have suffered for it—she is ill in the tooth-ache and I have got a bad cold which was so exceedingly troublesome yesterday that I could not lift up my eyes. While I lay on my bed, my dear Lady Beaumont, my thoughts were full of you, I was so deeply affected with the tender kindness of your last letter. If I could have done any thing I should have written immediately for my own heart's comfort to tell you how happy, how proud I am of your friendship, or rather I ought to be proud in them to whom I chiefly

¹ Her nephew (v. Letter 187).

owe the gift; for to my Brother, surely, if I am in myself worthy of your esteem I owe it; or if I am in any degree worthy of the great affection which Coleridge feels for me: but when I think how great his regard for me is, knowing that all you know of me is from him, I really, (it is no false modesty, as my Brother who knows all my thoughts could tell you) I really, (much as I desire to see you) am almost afraid of it, you will find me so different from what you have imagined, and (believe me) so much inferior. I have not those powers which Coleridge thinks I have—I know it—my only merits are my devotedness to those I love, and I hope a charity towards all mankind. Perhaps it may seem to you that I have said too much about myself, that it is but one of the shapes which vanity puts on, and this thought would have kept me silent but for the high value which I set upon your esteem and for that cause my strong desire that you should judge and expect of me as I am.

My Brother chanced to meet with Richardson's letters¹ at a Friend's house, and glancing over them, read those written by Mrs Klopstock: he was exceedingly affected by them, and said it was impossible to read them without loving the woman. We have been very desirous to see the Book ever since, and hope to be able to borrow it soon, but any new Book in our neighbourhood passes from house to house, and it is difficult to come at it within any reasonable time. Poor Klopstock! we saw him at Hamburgh in company with Coleridge—he had then all the liveliness of a lively Frenchman about him, though his legs were so much swoln with the dropsy that I dare say he walked with great pain and difficulty—his second wife was with him, a young well-looking woman (that is young for the wife of so old a man)—he had married her, I believe, for a nurse, and she might be and probably was a very good woman; but she did not seem to have much of the Sensibility of his first Wife. She, I believe, was buried at Altona, and Klopstock planted a Yew-tree upon her

¹ *Correspondence of Samuel Richardson, a selection from the Original Manuscripts, to which is prefixed A biographical account of the author and observations on his writings*, by Anna Lætitia Barbauld, 6 vols., 1804. Vol. 3 contains four letters written by Mrs. K. to S. R. in 1757–8, giving a naïve account of her romantic attachment to K. and her brief married life. She died in childbirth Dec. 1758.

grave, which Mr Duppa, an artist who was here in the Summer, told me he had seen a flourishing tree. I wish we had known of its existence, and visited it when we were there. I thought I had told you that the bargain does not stand between Mr Jackson and the Purchaser of his house, so Mrs Coleridge and the Southey's will continue there till C's return. I hope no longer—for the only comfort we had in thinking of Mrs C's being turned out, was that Coleridge might have no temptation to stay in this Country. We have not met with a house for ourselves, so we are now contented to stay where we are till we see Coleridge, and then where he settles we shall settle, indeed we are half glad we cannot find a house as it will be impossible for us to stay long in this country; and we seem as if we could not make another home out of the vale of Grasmere, while we might yet be so near as to see the mountain-tops that gird it about. Surely we shall have the happiness of meeting you there—perhaps we may remain two summers longer, for it is possible that we may continue there a short time even after Coleridge's return—with what joy should I lead you to our Orchard top! how happily could we sit with Coleridge upon the Moss seat! and how many tranquil hours of pleasure might we not enjoy in visiting those places where my Brother has murmured his Verses to himself!

I ought to tell you (for I am sure that you will else be uneasy about us) that we shall take care not to catch cold in going home. In the first place we shall not go over Kirkstone, for that mountain was the chief cause of our suffering. I had to bear the Baby in my arms up the hill, which heated me violently, and as soon as I sate down again on the Carriage I felt a pain in my head and the cold coming on. My Sister too, from being overheated, though I did not permit her to carry the Baby, increased the tooth-ache which she had had by fits for a few days before. We shall return by another Road and shall not be obliged to walk any part of the way, so, as we shall chuse a very fine morning for our departure, I hope I shall have the pleasure of telling you that we are perfectly well and comfortable when we reach our own home again. John is perfectly recovered and can walk stoutly as ever, but his Father was obliged to carry him most of the way up the hill. Your Goddaughter, being the less weight,

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fell to my share. She is a sweet infant: very lively, quite different from her Brother, yet like him. Miss Hutchinson desires me to present her best respects to you. Hartley Coleridge is here—Dear little Creature! he said to me this morning on seeing Johnny cry after his Father who was going to take a walk: 'If he had the sense to know where *my* Father is, he would not cry when his is going such a little way.' God bless you, my dear Friend! We all join in affectionate remembrance to you and Sir George—believe me [?] yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

I should like very much to see Sir George's picture from *the Thorn*—We are all passionately fond of the picture above our chimney piece. We hope to be at home in a week.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Dunmow, Essex.

MS. 190. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson
K(—)

Park house. January 6th 1805.

My dear Friend,

It is near seven o'clock, Sunday night, we have just put our two children to bed and William, Mary, Sara, Joanna, Tom, and George Hutchinson with Hartley Coleridge are making a Christmas party round the fire. My thoughts are with you and have often been with you since we came here; how would it have enlivened our fireside if you had been one of us, and so near your own home! We came to Parkhouse in the Irish Car on Wednesday. The day before New Year's day was one of the most delightful days that ever was felt; we were all taking our pleasure upon the ice, William and George Hutchinson pushed us along in their skates on the ice (Grasmere Water is entirely frozen over) and we carried the children on our knees, John and even little Dorothy. In our good spirits we resolved with true courage, and perhaps a little rashness it might seem, to come to see Sara the next day if the weather was not changed. It proved a fine morning, and we had a delightful journey, the children were no worse—but owing to our being over heated in climbing Kirkstone both Mary and I suffered for it. She has been ill in

the tooth ache unable to stir out ever since we came and I caught a very bad cold. All this would have been spared if William would have allowed us a little more time, but he was so much afraid of our being too late at night and hurried us up the hill—I carried Dorothy in my arms, Mary had enough to do to carry herself and her clothes, William bore Johnny and G Hutchinson took care of the horse. We shall return by the other road and shall not have any hills to climb, so I hope we shall be no worse for our journey home. Sara is very well—looks well. We are all exceedingly anxious about Coleridge—no letters have arrived, we believe him to be at Malta and William assures us that if they do not manage like idiots the fever may be kept out of that small Island.

Your letter affected us very much and I was very proud of Tom. Give my kind love to him and tell him we are all very glad that he remembers his old Friends with so much affection, he writes very nicely and I hope he will go on improving. The next time I write to you I shall write him a letter also, at present I have not time to do more than just tell you how we are going on for the person is waiting who is to carry this letter to the post-office. When I write to Tom I shall take a large sheet of paper and write plain that he may have the pleasure of *reading* the letter as well as calling it his own. William and I walked this morning up the Vale of Dacre to Hutton John. We had a delightful walk, the more delightful for those mingled recollections painful yet sweet of the walk we had through that vale when we came from Keswick to see you at Eusemere. Oh my dear Friend when we saw the white spot at the foot of Ulswater, your house, as we came along in the twilight.¹ I remembered most vividly the first time we visited you and many other times—when we came from Water Millock for instance and saw the lights before us in the windows. Yet we have reason to be thankful that you have had the resolution to part with it for I am sure it would never more have done you good. We now have little thought of leaving our cottage till Coleridge's return which surely will not be long, and we shall go wherever he goes—and why may not you be near us too? This moment they have come

¹ v. D. W.'s *Grasmere Journal*, July 12, 1802.

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in to hasten me, the man must be off. God Bless you my dear Friend, I will write again very soon—and do let us hear from you as often as you can with comfort write a few lines.

My dear Friend farewell

Yours ever more

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, at Mr John Clarkson's, Purfleet, Nr London.

MS.

191. W. W. to Walter Scott

K(—)

Grasmere Jany 16th [1805]

Dear Scott,

Your Letter announcing your *Border Romance*¹ as being on its way to my Sister I received yesterday. The Romance has not arrived yet, but if it have reached Mr Jolliff's hands there can be little doubt of its finding its way to Mr Monkhouse and thence to us. My Sister, who most cordially thanks you for your thus kindly remembering her, is very anxious as I am to see a work the Fragments of which gave us so much pleasure.

I received a Letter from you some time ago which I ought to beg your pardon for not having answered before this time; I have no excuse but my trick of procrastination. We were very sorry that we did not see you last summer, and much more so when informed of the melancholy cause which kept you at home.² May we hope to see you here in the summer coming? If I had written when I ought to have done some weeks ago, I should have had to inform you that Coleridge's and Southey's families were to be dislodged from their residence at Keswick without any probability of finding another in this Country; so that one great motive to your coming hither would have been certainly done away. The occasion was their Landlord having sold the House which Coleridge and S. occupy; but the bargain is off; so that if you come next summer Southey will almost certainly be at Keswick, and I hope Coleridge also; though it will be the duty

¹ *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, published in Jan. 1805.

² Captain Robert Scott, his 'affectionate uncle', died June 10, 1804. Scott had much business to transact as his uncle's executor (*v. Lockhart*, chap. xiii).

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of all his friends to do their utmost in forcing him from this Country, to which he is so much attached ; but the rainy climate disagrees with him miserably. When Coleridge has found out a residence better suited to his state of health, we shall remove and settle near him ; I mention these things in order that you may be prevailed upon to come and see us here, while we are yet near neighbours to you, and inhabitants of so beautiful a country which I am sure you would be delighted with, and the more retired beauties of which we could lead you to better than anybody else. Mrs Scott's domestic arrangements will I am afraid keep her at home, if not, Mrs Wordsworth and my Sister bid me say that they should be most happy to see her. Our Cottage is so small, containing only two bedrooms, that we cannot offer her a bed, but the Inn of the Village is near, and the people very attentive and obliging ; and a quiet house.

I am very glad to hear of your Farm¹ on Tweedside, you will be quite in the district of your own most interesting local feelings, in a charming Country besides, and I was not a little glad it brought you so much nearer to us instead of removing you so much farther from us. I sincerely wish you fortune in your farming labours, good crops, thriving cattle, and little vexation.

On the other side you will find a few stanzas, which I hope, for the subject at least, will give you some pleasure. I wrote them, not without a view of pleasing you, soon after our return from Scotland, though I have been too lazy to send them to you till now. They are in the same sort of metre as the *Leader Haughs*, and I have borrowed the name *Burn-mill* meadow from that poem, for which I wish you would substitute something that may really be found in the Vale of Yarrow. I only mean the Verses for your own perusal, should you think well enough of them to shew them to any body else, do not part with the Copy out of your own hands.

I conclude with repeating thanks and assuring you that we are most anxious to see *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*. My Sister and Wife join with me in best remembrances to you and Mrs Scott, and believe me your sincere Friend

W. Wordsworth

¹ Scott purchased Ashestiel in the summer of 1804.

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I ought to have told you that it is three months since we heard from Coleridge, we are now very anxious about him, but we suppose that the reason for our not hearing from him is, the difficulty thrown in the way of Letters by the pestilential disease which Heaven grant may be kept out of Malta. He was benefited by the Climate when we last heard. Adieu.

Address: Walter Scott Esqr, South Castle Street, Edinburgh.

MS.
K.

192. *J. W. to W. W.*

Ship *Abergavenny* at Portsmouth,
Jan^y. 24th, 1805.

My dear Wm.,

I ought to have written to you long ago but I have a most utter dislike to writing if I can avoid it, and I can assure you, tho' no man of business myself, I have had quite enough to engage the attention of a man more fitted for it than myself. I have the pleasure to inform you that the *Abergavenny* is arrived safe at Portsmouth; and if the wind continues fair, which it is at present, shall expect to leave this place to-morrow. We had a very narrow escape in the Downs. The *Warren Hastings*, Indiaman, drifted foul of us, and in a heavy gale of wind, but fortunately did us little damage. She has suffered so much that we are order'd to proceed to sea without her. The Purser is dispatched, and I expect him at Portsmouth every hour. The convoy appointed is the Weymouth Frigate of 44 Guns. I have been so much engaged since I arrived in England that I regret very much it has been out of my power to pay you a visit in the North of England, and I can assure [you] that except to see the ship, I have not been three miles out of London since we arrived.

My Investment is well laid in, and my voyage thought by most persons the first of the season; and if we are so fortunate as to get safe and soon to Bengal,—I mean before any other ship of the season,—I have no doubt but that I shall make a very good voyage of it, if not a *very great* one—at least this is the general opinion. I have got my investment upon the best of terms, having paid ready money for great part of it, which I was enabled

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to do by one gentleman lending me £5000. It amounts to about £20,000 in goods and money.

The passengers are all down, and we are anxiously expecting to sail. We shall muster at my table 36 or 38 persons. This must alone have given me a great deal of trouble, to provide provisions, etc. for them. I was obliged to apply to the Court of Directors to have some of the passengers turned out of the ship, which was granted. I thought at one time I should have had 45 persons at my table.

In ship's company we have 200, and soldiers and passengers 200 more, amounting all together to 400, so that I shall have sufficient employment on my hands to keep all these people in order.

I should have liked very much to have seen the poetry you have written (which I have not seen). In the 'Lyrical Ballads' my favorites are *The Mad Mother*, part of *The Indian Woman*, and *Joanna*. I like *Michael*, and all the *Poems on the Naming of Places*, but *Joanna* best, and I also like —.¹ The poem on *The Wye* is a poem that I admire, but after having read it I do not like to turn to it again. Among those unpublish'd that I have seen my favorite is *The Leech Gatherer*, *The Sparrow's Nest*, *The Butterfly*, and *Cuckow*. There is a harshness in many of the rest which I do not like. I think the 'Lyrical Ballads' taken all together far superior to the last poems.

Remember me most affectionately to Mary and Dorothy. Give my little namesake and his sister a kiss from me, and believe me to be,

Your affection^e brother,
John Wordsworth.²

Address: Wm. Wordsworth Esq., Ambleside, Westmorland.

¹ The name is illegible from sealing wax on the MS. It may be *The Brothers*, or it may be *Beggars*.

² A week later J. W. wrote to his brother Christopher as follows:

Ship Abergavenny
31st Jan. 1805

My dear Brother

We are at Portsmouth and expect to sail tomorrow Wind and Weather permitting. I am sorry I could not have the pleasure of seeing you in Norfolk but my time would not permit me. I shall look forward with a great deal of pleasure to the time when we shall meet again and if I have the good

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MS.
K(—)

193. *W. W. to Richard Sharp*

[February, 1805.]

My dear Sir,

I received the Watch some time ago and am much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken about it: it is a very neat one and likely to answer my purpose; I have however been obliged to set aside the Watchmakers injunction of not putting it into any bodys hands but his own, in case of any thing ailing it, as it took a fit of stopping I suppose from having been shaken by the Carriage. I am sorry to say that when the little Box containing the Watch, etc. was opened in my Brother's chambers, only 3 shillings were found in it; the other 14 having been taken out. I mention this not that you should give yourself any trouble about such a trifle but only that if the fraud have been committed by any body either about yourself or the Watchmaker you may be upon your guard against the offender.

Do not think that I mean to abuse your goodness by what I am now going to say. People living in the world don't like to ask favours, we in the Country being necessarily more dependent are less shy, but let me out with my meaning at once.

Do you know of any Corn or wine Merchant who wants a Clerk? Mrs. Wordsworth has a Brother who was brought up to farming in the Country, and has been unfortunate, and now wishes to try his luck in another line, and let me speak more seriously wishes to be in the way of earning his bread, having lost his own little property by a series of misfortunes, some of them I know unmerited. He writes an excellent hand, has had some experience (but on this I don't build) in book-keeping. If you should happen to hear of any place, his views are not high, chiefly wishing at present for a maintenance, though if with a chance of getting forward, so much the better. Do not

fortune to arrive in England safe I will threaten you with the first visit. I have a family of 35 to provide for at present which you may suppose must give me a great deal of trouble.

I have written this short letter principally to take Farewell of you and my Sister to whom I beg my kindest remembrances

I am my Dear Brother Your Affec^{te}
John Wordsworth.

think my dear Friend! that I wish to put you to any trouble in this business, only if you should happen to know of such a place, or any Clerk's place not of much trust or intricacy as he is inexperienced, Mrs. W. as well as myself should be very happy, if you would point it out to us.

We have no tidings of poor Coleridge, for Heaven's sake, should you hear of him, write to me; and also do let me know whether we shall see you, as you said, this next June. Woe to poor Grasmere for ever and ever! A wretched Creature, wretched in name and Nature, of the name of *Crump*, goaded on by his still more wretched Wife, (for by the bye, the man, though a Liverpool Attorney, is, I am told, a very good sort of Fellow, but the wife as ambitious as Semiramis),—this same Wretch has at last begun to put his long impending threats in execution; and when you next enter the sweet paradise of Grasmere you will see staring you in the face, upon that beautiful ridge that elbows out into the vale, (behind the church and towering far above its steeple), a temple of abomination, in which are to be enshrined Mr. and Mrs. Crump. Seriously, this is a great vexation to us, as this House¹ will stare you in the face from every part of the Vale, and entirely destroy its character of simplicity and seclusion.

I now see no newspapers, not even a weekly one, so that I am in utter ignorance of what is doing in the world. My Poem advances quick or slow as the fit comes; but I wish sadly to have it finished, in order that after a reasonable respite I may fall to my principal work.

I purpose to make a Tour somewhere next summer, if I can possibly muster the Cash, but where I have not fixed. I incline much to Norway, but 5 or 6 weeks' sea voyage, as thither and back again it will be, frightens me. Else I could sail most conveniently from Stockton upon Tees, Mrs. Wordsworth having a Brother who is a Timber Merchant, and has vessels regularly passing to and fro. Could you give me any information that would be of use in case of such a scheme taking effect? But don't trouble yourself about it now, as it is so unlikely to hold.

¹ Allan Bank. W. was himself the first tenant of it, and lived there 1808-11.

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My sister and Mrs. W. desire their best remembrances to you—By the Bye I ought not to forget that we had a Letter from my Brother the Captain a few days ago from Portsmouth, speaking very favorably of his hopes, and in good spirits.

Believe me, my dear Friend, yours with great respect,
W. Wordsworth.

Excuse this vile Scrawl.

Address: Rich^d Sharp Esq^{re}, Mark Lane, London.

MS. 194. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Grasmere 10th February 1805.

My dear Friend,

I wrote a short letter to you at Park House among the noise of many voices and other interruptions. Since that time I have daily intended writing again but have put off till now when I cannot take the pen without many self reproaches reading over your letter which is dated so long ago as the 10th of December. I now do not know your address but think it is safest to direct to your father's as most likely you have left Purfleet. I wish you may have been happy and comfortable there. I hope you are not at Bury for the weather is so very severe but wherever you are your Father will know. I was exceedingly affected with your last letter, it is indeed a long time since we saw each other: here are two children at Grasmere, one that can go about from house to house, the other that knows the faces of all the family and smiles and talks in her way, and if all prosper with her will probably run about in less than six months more, and you have never seen either of them! it is like a dream to me that Eusemere is not yet your home. I cannot think of it as anything else, and it appears quite unnatural that you should have no knowledge of these dear Children, who now seem to complete our being and make us so happy that I wonder how we could do without them. My dear Friend I trust you will have strength and health to come into the North next summer. I do not know any one thing that would make us more happy than to see John and Dorothy playing about your knees, I should very much wish that Tom should

see them. I daresay he would be remarkably good to young children. Dorothy is a pretty Child, very lively, but a *little* creature, though perfectly healthy, she is like John, that is as a Sister to a Brother, but totally different. She has much prettier eyes and is altogether prettier. The expression of her countenance does not at all resemble his, she has not that superior, that noble look that he had when a Baby and, much *prettier* as she is, I think I have seen him more *beautiful* than ever she is. She is now under inoculation for the cow-pox. You ask me if I feel different respecting her now in her time of Babyhood and John. I am sure I do not love her less, sometimes I fancy I love her more, but there is certainly a difference which may possibly be sufficiently accounted for by the novelty of a first child—everything that it does is curious and keeps one perpetually wakeful and alive, besides the care which the first child continues to demand, interferes with the *extra* attentions which otherwise would be paid to the second. On the other hand I think bringing more knowledge with the love makes us more tender, not so proud, not so much elated with the joy of possessing such a gift but inwardly as happy in thinking of it. There is some difference in the sex of the children—something of delicacy about Dorothy as a girl that makes one love her as if one's love fortified her independent of any consideration of future helplessness, while the courage and strength of the Boy keeps alive the pride which we have always had in him. Mary suckles Dorothy and I hope will be able to continue it for some time. You will be glad to hear that she is not with child again—for her constitution is not strong enough to support the having a child every year. John has cut sixteen teeth and is now about some more which makes him frequently irritable and restless at nights, otherwise he is remarkably healthy—he was much handsomer 7 months ago than he is now, but he is a child that no one would pass without remark—he is very slow about talking, he has a few words which he sings in our ears repeating them over and over again. 'happy' is a dear word of his—he goes about the house 'happy happy!' and it is frequently the first sound he utters when he wakes in the morning, and sometimes in the stillness of the night, he says 'happy' and puts his arms about my neck, dropping asleep

again in the same instant. In the morning after 'happy' comes 'pie and tates' which includes everything eatable—pie and potatoes—he can say many words but he has little wish to learn to talk and cannot endure to endeavour to say anything again which he does not say with perfect ease—he has no sentence but 'up o' knee'. We have to-day been preparing an alphabet for him, which may perhaps help him to some sounds—he understands everything that is said and is wonderfully adroit in making himself understood—his chief knowledge is of cattle and rural objects, he is delighted with water, trees, and any Burst of prospect, (as for instance when we came upon Rydale at the top of the hill) always produces his own exclamation of pleasure 'hooy hooy hooy', which he utters in the sweetest tone possible. We have built a delightful shed at the top of the orchard, it is a warm shelter in the winter when the frost is not keen and we hope if it please God to continue our health and strength to make it our summer parlour, it is coated with heather and lined with moss and seated all round and thatched with straw—it will be circular but for the door place which is wide but not near so wide as the diameter of the hut. I hope we shall see each of you in it next summer. We have no letter from Coleridge which makes us very anxious about him but the papers say that the fever is not at Malta, and if any evil had befallen him we certainly should have heard by some means or other. Mrs Coleridge is coming on Tuesday to spend a few days with us on her Road to Liverpool. We had a note from her on Thursday saying that two days before Mary Stamper had gone to Church to be married without saying a word to her and the next day had come for her wages. This when Mrs Coleridge was preparing for a journey and had intended leaving the Children to her care! Luckily she has got a young Woman to take the charge who has worked for her and is remarkably fond of them. William goes on almost regularly with his work—he has often spoken to us with tears in his eyes of the pleasure of reading it to you. Johnny enters the room with Sally Ashburner 'Anny! Anny!' that is Auntie! he has a basket in his hand with thread in with which I am to sew him a plaister on a burnt arm—he is exceedingly fond of Sally Ashburner who has taken the place of our Servant, she being

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gone to see a sister who is dying. I must not forget to tell you that our neighbours enquire after you. Peggy Ashburner being a sickly body herself never forgets you and old Molly always talks of you all—Mr Clarkson and lile¹ Tommy. Sara Hutchinson is at Kendal with an old school fellow who is married there. She will return by Grasmere. I must leave the paper below for a letter to Tom. I am afraid he will be disappointed with the size of it. We have not heard anything of the Book on the Quakers which you mention. It would indeed be grievous if it should supercede the necessity of Mr Clarkson's work, but I think it is more probable that it may be of advantage to it, if it be of any value, and if not it can do no harm. Pray tell us what you think of the book and how Mr Clarkson goes on. We want very much to hear from you again, do write immediately. My Brother John wrote to us from Plymouth² in great spirits expecting to sail the next day if the wind was fair. I have had a letter from Priscilla, she seems to be very happy. Mr Crump has actually pitched upon the ground for his house, grounds etc. and made a Bargain with a Builder. It is to stand in face of all the vale, above the church! I have often said I would cease to grieve about these things, but now I cannot help it, it is a publick sorrow, and I think I lament on that account chiefly for we do not set our hearts on spending all our days at Grasmere. Mary is putting Dorothy to bed in the parlour. Sally has just brought John in her arms [?] to kiss me and bid me 'Ta Ta', he is always delighted to go to bed.

We all join in kindest love to you and Mr Clarkson. Fare[well] my dear friend, may God bless you.

Yours ever and ever

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson, at Mr. Buck's, Bury, Suffolk.

¹ Lile: Molly's dialect word for little.

² D. should have written Portsmouth.

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MS.

195. W. W. to R. W.¹

Monday evening 11th Febr'y —05

My dear Brother,

The lamentable news which your Letter has brought has now been known to us seven hours during which time I have done all in my power to alleviate the distress of poor Dorothy and my Wife.—Mary and I were walking out when the Letter came; it was brought by Sarah Hutchinson who had come from Kendal where she was staying, to be of use in the house and to comfort us; so that I had no power of breaking the force of the shock to Dorothy or to Mary. They are both very ill, Dorothy especially, on whom this loss of her beloved Brother will long take deep hold. I shall do my best to console her; but John was very dear to me and my heart will never forget him. God rest his soul! When you can bear to write do inform us not generally but as minutely as possible of the manner of this catastrophe. It would comfort us in this lonely place, though at present nobody in the house but myself could bear to hear a word on the subject. It is indeed a great affliction to us!

God bless you my dear Brother; Dorothy's and Mary's best love. We wish you were with us. God keep the rest of us together! the set is now broken. Farewell.

Dear Brother

Wm Wordsworth.

Address: Mr. Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

¹ John W. was drowned on Feb. 5th. This letter is in answer to the following from Richard:

Staple Inn

7th Febr'y 1805.

My dear Brother,

It is with the most painful concern that I inform you of the Loss of the Ship Abergavenny, off Weymouth last night.

I am acquainted with but few of the particulars of this melancholy Event. I am told that a great number of Persons have perished, and that our Brother John is amongst that number. Mr Joseph Wordsworth is amongst those who have been saved. The Ship struck against a Rock, and went to the Bottom. You will impart this to Dorothy in the best manner you can, and remember me most affectly to her, and your wife, believe me yours most sincerely,

Rd Wordsworth.

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MS. 196. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

M(—) G(—) K(—)

Monday, Grasmere, Feb. 11. 1805.

My dear Friend,

The public papers will already have broken the shock which the sight of this letter will give you: you will have learned by them the loss of the Earl of Abergavenny East-Indiaman, and, along with her, of a great proportion of the crew, that of her captain, our Brother and a most beloved Brother he was. This calamitous news we received at 2 o'clock to-day, and I write to you from a house of mourning. My poor sister, and wife who loved him almost as we did (for he was one of the most amiable of men), are in miserable affliction, which I do all in my power to alleviate; but Heaven knows I want consolation myself. I can say nothing higher of my ever-dear Brother than that he was worthy of his sister, who is now weeping beside me, and of the friendship of Coleridge; meek, affectionate, silently enthusiastic, loving all quiet things, and a Poet in every thing but words.

Alas! what is human life! This present moment I thought this morning, would have been devoted to the pleasing employment of writing a letter to amuse you in your confinement. I had singled out several little fragments (descriptions merely), which I purposed to have transcribed from my poems, thinking that the perusal of them might give you a few minutes' gratification; and now I am called to this melancholy office.

I shall never forget your goodness in writing so long and interesting a letter to me under such circumstances. This letter also arrived by the same post which brought the unhappy tidings of my brother's death, so that they were both put into my hands at the same moment.

I cannot but turn to you to thank you for your goodness, and to congratulate you and Lady Beaumont on your recovery, assuring you at the same time that I and all my family pray earnestly that your valuable life may long be preserved. When the state of my feelings will permit I shall write to you at length, in the mean time let me thank Lady Beaumont in my sister's name for her two last Letters. We were certain that something

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uncommon had befallen you, and of course apprehended evil; Lady B.'s Letter though bringing distressing tidings of your illness, nevertheless relieved us from much anxiety. Again my dear Sir George farewell; do not fail to write as soon as you can without injury to yourself; but not before on any account.

Your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth

I shall do all in my power to sustain my sister under her sorrow, which is, and long will be, bitter and poignant. We did not love him as a brother merely, but as a man of original mind, and an honour to all about him. Oh! dear friend, forgive me for talking thus. We have had no tidings of Coleridge. I tremble for the moment when he is to hear of my brother's death; it will distress him to the heart,—and his poor body cannot bear sorrow. He loved my brother, and he knows how we at Grasmere loved him.

M. G. K. 197. W. W. to Robert Southey

Grasmere, Tuesday Evening, [Feb. 12,] 1805.

We see nothing here that does not remind us of our dear brother; there is nothing about us (save the children, whom he had not seen) that he has not known and loved.

If you could bear to come to this house of mourning to-morrow, I should be forever thankful. We weep much to-day, and that relieves us. As to fortitude, I hope I shall show that, and that all of us will show it, in a proper time, in keeping down many a silent pang hereafter. But grief will, as you say, and must, have its course; there is no wisdom in attempting to check it under the circumstances which we are all of us in here.

I condole with you, from my soul, on the melancholy account of your own brother's situation; God grant you may not hear such tidings! Oh! it makes the heart groan, that, with such a beautiful world as this to live in, and such a soul as that of man's is by nature and gift of God, we should go about on such errands as we do, destroying and laying waste; and ninety-nine of us in a hundred never easy in any road that travels towards peace and quietness! And yet, what virtue and what goodness, what

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heroism and courage, what triumphs of disinterested love everywhere; and human life, after all, what is it! Surely, this is not to be forever, even on this perishable planet! Come to us tomorrow, if you can; your conversation, I know, will do me good. . . .

All send best remembrances to you all.

Your affectionate friend,
W. Wordsworth.

MS. *198. W. W. to Christopher W.*

Wednesday noon
[13 Feb. 1805]

My dear Christopher,

We are anxious to know how you and your Wife support the calamity with which it has pleased God to visit us. The lamentable tidings reached us on Monday last at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. My Wife had seen much very much of John and loved him as a Brother, as to poor Dorothy I need not speak of her. We have done all that could be done to console each other by weeping together. I trust we shall with the blessing of God grow calmer every day. I cannot say anything at present more favourable than that we are all free from bodily illness, and do our best to support ourselves. I was useful to Dorothy and Mary during the first 12 hours which were dreadful, at present I weep with them and attempt little more. Hereafter I hope we shall all shew a proper fortitude. With most affectionate remembrances to you and our Sister from Dorothy and Mary

I remain your Brother and Friend
W. Wordsworth

Do write immediately.

Address: Revd. C. Wordsworth, Oby, near Acle, Norfolk.

MS. *199. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*
G(—) K(—)

Grasmere, Feb 20th, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I cannot express how much your goodness has affected all of us under this roof. Lady Beaumont's remembrance, too, has

comforted us much. We are all somewhat *easier* in mind I might say ; but our *grief* is of a kind which time only can alleviate. We know what we have lost, and what we have to endure ; our anguish is allayed, but pain and sadness have taken place of it ; with fits of sorrow which we endeavour to suppress but cannot. But why dwell upon this mournful subject ? I have neither right nor inclination to do so.

To the question which you have so nobly put to me, I will answer to the best of my power in a spirit worthy of your friendship ; that is with entire openness, laying before you the whole of my worldly concerns ; Upon second thought it seems that I cannot do better than give you a brief sketch of the history of my Life as far as relates to these matters.

My father, who was an attorney of considerable eminence, died intestate, when we were children : and the chief part of his personal property after his decease was expended in an unsuccessful attempt to compel the late Lord Lonsdale to pay a debt of about £5000 to my father's estate. Enough, however, was scraped together to educate us all in different ways. I, the second son, was sent to college with a view to the profession of the Church or Law ; into one of which I should have been forced by necessity, had not a friend left me £900. This bequest was from a young man with whom, though I call him friend, I had had but little connection ; and the act was done entirely from a confidence on his part that I had powers and attainments which might be of use to mankind. This I have mentioned, because it was his due, and I thought the fact would give you pleasure. Upon the interest of this £900, £400 being laid out in annuity, with £200 deducted from the principal, and £100 a legacy to my sister, and £100 more which the 'Lyrical Ballads' have brought me, my sister and I contrived to live seven years, nearly eight. Lord Lonsdale then died, and the present Lord Lowther paid to my father's estate £8500. Of this sum I believe £1800 apiece will come to my sister and myself ; at least, would have come : but £3000 was lent out to our poor brother, I mean taken from the whole sum, which was about £1200 more than his share, which £1200 belonged to Dorothy and me. This £1200 we freely lent him : whether it was insured or no, I do not

know; but I dare say it will prove to be the case; we did not however stipulate for its being insured. But you shall faithfully know every particular as soon as I have learned them: this I promise you and I should deem myself altogether unworthy of your friendship were it otherwise. The person to whom I must apply for this knowledge is a Brother whom we have in London; but his hands and heart are at present so full of our lost Brother John's affairs that it would be improper in me to make the application yet a while. I ought to add that my wife's property [is] at present £400 and some odd pounds. Thus, my dear Sir George, you have the whole laid before you, to have told you what I may possibly have lost would have been nothing without telling you what I have.

Having spoken of worldly affairs, let me again mention my beloved brother. It is now just five years since, after a separation of fourteen years (I may call it a separation, for we only saw him four or five times, and by glimpses) he came to visit his sister and me in this cottage, and passed eight blessed months with us. He was then waiting for the command of the ship to which he was appointed when he quitted us. As you will have seen, we had little to live upon, and he as little (Lord Lonsdale being then alive). But he encouraged me to persist, and to keep my eye steady on its object. He would work for me (that was his language), for me and his sister; and I was to endeavour to do something for the world. A thousand times has he said could I but see you with a green field of your own, and a cow, and two or three other little comforts, I should be happy! He went to sea, as commander, with this hope; his voyage was very unsuccessful, he having lost by it considerably. When he came home, we chanced to be in London, and saw him. 'Oh!' said he, 'I have thought of you, and nothing but you; if ever of myself and my bad success, it was only on your account.' He went again to sea a second time, and was also unsuccessful, still with the same hopes on our account, though then not so necessary, Lord Lowther having paid the money. Lastly came this lamentable voyage, which he entered upon full of expectation, and love to his sister and myself, and my wife, whom, indeed, he loved with all a brother's tenderness.

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This is the end of his part of the agreement, of his efforts for my welfare! God grant me life and strength to fulfil mine! I shall never forget him,—never lose sight of him: there is a bond between us yet, the same as if he were living, nay, far more sacred, calling upon me to do my utmost, as he to the last did his utmost, to live in honour and worthiness. Some of the newspapers carelessly asserted that he did not wish to survive his ship. This is false. He was heard by one of the surviving officers giving orders with all possible calmness a very little before the ship went down; and when he could remain at his post no longer, then, and not till then, he attempted to save himself. I knew this would be so, but it was satisfactory to us to have it confirmed by external evidence. Do not think our grief unreasonable. Of all human beings whom I ever knew, he was the man of the most rational desires, the most sedate habits, and the most perfect self-command. He was modest and gentle, and shy even to disease; but this was wearing off. In everything his judgments were sound and original; his taste in all the arts, music and poetry in particular (for these he, of course, had had the best opportunities of being familiar with), was exquisite; and his eye for the beauties of Nature was as fine and delicate as ever poet or painter was gifted with; in some discriminations, owing to his education and way of life, far superior to any person's I ever knew. But, alas! what avails it? It was the will of God that he should be taken away. My dear and honoured friend, one pang I had, one vain wish, one bitter regret; it was this, that in the hour of his agony he might have had communicated to him for one poor moment your goodness to his Brother: when I read your last Letter with tears in my eyes, I could not help sighing to myself why could it not be so? but peace!

I trust in God that I shall not want fortitude; but my loss is great and irreparable. Now my dear Friend let me speak of a subject very near me, that is your health. You mend, you say, but I fear slowly: do write to let me know how you go on. I was hurt that your excellent Letter about the young Roscius should have arrived at such a time; but it could not be helped; it has since amused me much and I thank you heartily for it; the account is throughout interesting and in many respects

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highly valuable. I will send the dimensions of the drawing in my next. I cannot now for I never cast my eyes up to it without thinking of my poor Brother and the pleasure it would have given him had he seen it. Dear Lady Beaumont forgets that Coleridge will learn the disaster by the public papers: We shall write to him in a few days. Since I last wrote Mrs Coleridge has had a Letter from Coleridge: he was greatly better. He has engagements with the Governor; if these do not prevent him I am sure he will return the first minute he can after hearing the news. I am as sure of this as if I heard him say so.

Many thanks for the offer of your house; but I am not likely to be called to town. Lady Beaumont gives us hope we may see you next summer; this would, indeed, be great joy to us all. My sister thanks Lady B. for her affectionate remembrance of her and her letter, and will write as soon as ever she feels herself able. Her health, as was to be expected, has suffered much.

Your most affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

(P.S.) The Mr. Wordsworth saved was a second cousin of ours. My Brother had never been married. He completed his 32nd year last January, was in the prime of health, a manly person; and one of the finest countenances ever seen.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Dunmow, Essex.

MS.

*200. D. W. to R. W.*¹

February 27th 1805

My dear Brother,

We are exceedingly anxious to know how you are after this overwhelming sorrow. God be praised we are tolerably well in our health, and are composed in mind compared with what we have been. William and Mary have done all that could be done to comfort me, and I have done my best for them. Pray my dear Richard write to us to tell us how you are. If you have heard any particulars respecting the last moments of our Brother that

¹ Both this and the following letter were written on the same day, but they are dated Feb. 27 and Feb. 22 respectively. The earlier date is more probable.

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are not likely to have reached us you will communicate them to us if you can without too much distressing yourself, but do not put yourself to any pain about it—we shall be satisfied if we know but that you are well. We have had [many] thoughts about you. When I write again I hope I shall be able to write with calmness and a longer letter. May God bless you my dear Brother! Believe me ever

Your affectionate Sister
Dorothy Wordsworth

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS. 201. D. W. to Christopher W.

K(—)

(Grasmere) 22nd February 1805

My dear Brother

I have just written a few words to Richard to inquire after his health, for, like you, we are very anxious on his account and now my dear Christopher I venture to address myself to you. I dare not give way to my feelings for Oh! they are even yet more than I know how to struggle with. I bless God that our beloved lost one lived a virtuous Life and in his death was worthy of his life. May we none of us lose this precious remembrance!! and let us who are left cling closer to each other. William and Mary have been my comfort and support or indeed I should have sunk under it—a thousand times have I repeated to myself his last words ‘The will of God be done’ and be it so. I trust I shall always be both better and *happier* too because he has lived; though I seem to myself as if I never more could be as *cheerful* as heretofore. Wherever we turn—wherever we look, we see something that he knew and loved.

We are exceedingly concerned to hear that my Sister has been so ill, and at such a time too! perhaps the shock might bring on her illness. Do my dear Christopher write to tell us how she is,—and anything that you think can give us comfort. If you have heard any particulars of the last moments of our poor Brother that are not likely to have come to us communicate them to us.

I hope Priscilla will be quite restored when this reaches you.

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May God bless her and you and grant you many years of peace and love. Evermore I am your affectionate Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth

We are all as well as we could expect to be, though I cannot deny that the health of all of us has suffered—especially mine. Charles Lloyd and Mrs. Lloyd have both been to see us, poor Mrs. Lloyd was very much affected by our distress. As soon as I can go anywhere I shall go to Brathay.

Do write as soon as possible.

It will do us good to have a letter from you. We all have thought much of you and all who have been suffering with us.

Address: Revd. Christopher Wordsworth, Oby, near Acle, Norfolk.

ms. 202. D. W. and W. W. to R. W.

(D. writes)

Grasmere March 4th 1805.

My dear Brother

Being exceedingly anxious and uneasy about you I wrote to you, (the first letter I had been able to write since our dear Brother's death) to beg that you would write and let us know how you were. As we have had no letter from you I am afraid that mine has never been received, for it was entrusted to a carrier who has most likely lost it or neglected to put it into the post-office. I cannot be easy till we hear from you—Mary is very anxious about you also, indeed so are we all. We know how deeply you must have suffered from the first agony of the shock, and your mind must now be harassed and perplexed by many dismal affairs in connection with it. You will be continually seeing people who have had concerns with poor John and his ship and probably have many painful inquiries to answer. We are indeed afraid that your health should sink under it, and cannot get it out of our minds that you are ill. Pray my dear Richard, write to us, if only to tell us how your health is. I need not add that if you have leisure and have anything to communicate respecting our Brother John that may give us comfort, we shall thankfully receive it. We go about our house and garden with

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dismal hearts—John knew this place and loved it well, and every thing I see reminds me of him. Mary is a sincere mourner with us—but she has been a great comfort and consolation to me. We are all pretty well.

God bless you, my dear Brother,

Believe me ever your affectionate Sister

D. Wordsworth

One thing let me say.—If there is any thing saved from the wreck that belonged to my dear Brother, I should wish that some trifle may be preserved for me and Wm, or if he left any Book or any thing in your Rooms that you can part with.¹

(*W. writes*)

Dear Richd,

I see by the Newspapers that several of the Bodies have been found. Would it not be proper to write to the Clergyman at Weymouth or to some other fit person there, informing him of your address, or desiring him to take upon himself the charge of having John properly buried in case his body should be found. It is usual in such cases where the Parties are not known for the officers to be buried in separate graves, and the others thrown

¹ In answer to these letters R. W. wrote as follows:

Staple Inn

8th March 1805.

My dear Sister

I received your kind letter for which you will accept my warmest thanks. I hope you are by this time completely composed, and that William and Mary and yourself are in tolerable health. I have been as well as could be expected, and am getting up my spirits. It is impossible for me to enter into the particulars of the melancholy catastrophe. It will be enough to say that our dear Brother did every thing that man could do on so trying and arduous an occasion. This must be a great consolation to us all. I have no reason to think that any of us shall suffer in our Property. I have taken out administration. The Insurance was considerable.

I find that Christ. has had an offer from the Archbishop to be Chaplain. Whether he will accept it or not I cannot tell. I think of going down to Windsor about the End of next week for a few Days. I understood from a friend of Christ.'s who called on me the other day that he would be in London soon.

You will excuse me for not writing sooner, for the Truth is, I have had no relish for writing. Let me hear from you soon, how you all are. Remember me affectly to William and Mary and believe me most sincerely and affectionately (Give John a shake by the Hand)

R. Wordsworth.

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into one, this is done at the expense of the people of the town or Parish. I submit the above to your consideration, probably you may have taken already such steps as seemed proper.

I cannot say that the burthen of our affliction in this house is yet much lighter; to time we must look for ease. Dorothy though not ill is very thin and weak. Do write to us, we are very anxious about you, and if you would tell us any thing about John and his behaviour in his dreadful trial, do: for we are almost heart-broken. I am ever [?]

W. Wordsworth.

MS.

203. *W. W. to Walter Scott*

K(—)

Grasmere, March 7th, 1805.

Dear Scott,

By application to Mr. Jolliff we have at last received your Poem, for which my Sister returns you her sincere thanks.

High as our expectations were, I have the pleasure to say that the poem has surpassed them much. We think you have completely attained your object; the Book is throughout interesting and entertaining, and the picture of manners as lively as possible. My Sister would have written herself to express her thanks for the pleasure you have given her, but she cannot do it owing to distress of mind, from the late deplorable loss which we have sustained in the person of our Brother who was Commander of the East India Company's Ship the Earl of Abergavenny,¹ wrecked recently off Weymouth. This affliction weighs so heavy on the heart of all in this house, that we have neither strength nor [?] for anything. Our Brother was the pride and delight of our hearts, as gentle, as meek, as brave, as resolute, as noble a spirit as ever breathed.

I could have wished to have written to you at some length on the subject of your Poem; but I am unable; you will excuse me, and further, I know will sympathize with us under this grievous affliction.—I wrote a little while ago pressing you to come and see us next summer; I now repeat the invitation with

¹ W. did not know that Scott's first cousin, Cadet J. Rutherford, had also been lost in the E. of A. (*vide* Scott's reply to this letter, March 16, 1805).

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a heavy heart, which was first made with a light and cheerful one.—In the same Letter I sent you a copy of Verses about Yarrow. I mention this merely to identify the Letter—which may not have reached you as I know I am not quite correct in your address.

Farewell: my Sister, and I may add my Wife, join me in best remembrances to yourself and Mrs. Scott.—your sincere friend.

W. Wordsworth

MS. 204. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

M(—) G(—) K(—)

[Grasmere,] March 12th, 1805.

My dear Friend,

Your last most affectionate Letter moved me much. In regard to the enclosed note, after expressing our deep sense of your goodness, I scarcely know what to say; the best answer after this which I can make will be by stating a few facts relative to my disposition and habits of mind, and the circumstances under which I am.—And first let me say that it is no part of my creed that money may not be received from a Friend without a return equivalent in the way of bargain; I think it may, just as well as advice, consolation, preferment, recommendations to serve worldly advancement, or any thing else; I go further than this and do not think that a Man of Letters or Science forfeits any thing of his dignity by receiving pecuniary assistance even from those who are not his personal Friends; I mean in this as in the other case if he can justify the thing to himself by the circumstances under which he is placed, and the end to be answered.—Thus much for my notion whether right or wrong upon the general position: next comes the application to particular instances: and here with regard to money received from strangers or those with whom a Man of Letters has little personal connexion, nothing can justify this but strong necessity, for the thing is an evil in itself; the right or wrong in this case will be regulated by the importance of the object in view, and the inability to attain it without this, or other means being resorted

to.—With regard to personal Friends; according to the degree of love between them and the value they set upon each other, the necessity will diminish of weighing with scrupulous jealousy and fear whether such gifts should be received and to what amount: nevertheless in this as in every other species of communication good sense, strict moral principle, and the greatest delicacy on both sides ought to prevail.—As to myself who see much that I think amiss in the habits, practices and moral notions of the world, and whose life I may say with modesty, has been like that of my late Brother altogether unworldly, it would be strange if I should think that money poured out from so pure a cistern as the heart of a Friend could taint me, or if I should be afraid of it. You love me, respect me, know my situation, what my views have been and are; therefore I should detest myself could I have any uneasiness on this account or any thing but pleasure connected with it.

When I gave you so minute a history of my pecuniary affairs I did nothing more than your most friendly application seemed absolutely to exact of me; yet I had much satisfaction that you would see that even if what we had lent to our Brother should be entirely lost, we should nevertheless be still able to live in independence and comfort, having accustomed ourselves to such strict habits of frugality and self-denial. Since I wrote to you I have heard from my Brother in London; we had begged of him to inform us of any particulars which he might learn of our Brother John's last moments: he answers 'it is impossible for me to enter into the particulars of the melancholy catastrophe. It will be enough to say that our dear Brother did every thing which Man could do on so trying and arduous an occasion. This must be a great consolation to us all.' He then adds 'I have no reason to think that any of us shall suffer in our property'. You see then my dear Sir Geo. that our late disaster gives me no title to keep your Note as an impoverished Man, this I am glad of indeed; for our dear Brother's sake above all! I will not however beg leave to return the note because I am sure if you knew perfectly the state of our feelings you would think I did wrong; you say, you do not want it, we may; our spirits are bad and it is possible that as the summer comes on,

we may gather up resolution to stir from home, which may be of great use to us all. I doubt whether we shall have courage to do this, but I wish it much: our income is not such as to enable us to bear such expense, nor could I earn any money without taking off my attention from worthier things and my bodily strength is not equal to much literary drudgery; besides, I am strangely unfit for exertion as far as it is mere labour in the way of job for money. I will not therefore beg of you to accept of your money again; because it may be of serious benefit to the minds and health of us all; with this view, I shall keep it; applying a small part of it to the purchase of a few books which I have long wanted and which from the unsettled state of our affairs I did not know that I was justified in purchasing. I have spoken more than you will like upon this subject, but I was anxious you should fully enter into my feelings.

As I have said, your last letter affected me much. A thousand times have I asked myself, as your tender sympathy led me to do, 'why was he taken away?' and I have answered the question as you have done. In fact, there is no other answer which can satisfy and lay the mind at rest. Why have we a choice and a will, and a notion of justice and injustice, enabling us to be moral agents? Why have we sympathies that make the best of us so afraid of inflicting pain and sorrow, which yet we see dealt about so lavishly by the supreme governor? Why should our notions of right towards each other, and to all sentient beings within our influence, differ so widely from what appears to be His notion and rule, if everything were to end here? Would it not be blasphemy to say that, upon the supposition of the thinking principle being destroyed by death, however inferior we may be to the great Cause and Ruler of things, we have *more of love* in our nature than He has? The thought is monstrous; and yet how to get rid of it, except upon the supposition of *another* and a *better world*, I do not see. As to my departed brother, who leads our minds at present to these reflections, he walked all his life pure among many impure. Except a little hastiness of temper when anything was done in a clumsy or bungling manner, or when improperly contradicted upon occasions of not much importance, he had not one vice of his pro-

fession. I never heard an oath, or even an indelicate expression or allusion, from him in my life; his modesty was equal to that of the purest woman. In prudence, in meekness, in self-denial, in fortitude, in just desires and elegant and refined enjoyments, with an entire simplicity of manners, life, and habit, he was all that could be wished for in man; strong in health and of a noble person, with every hope about him that could render life dear, thinking of, and living only for, others—and we see what has been his end! So good must be better; so high must be destined to be higher.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
And all we praise; for worth, whose noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers;
Dream we, that lustre of the moral world
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,
And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,
The mind Almighty? Could it be, that fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine,
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out?¹

I will take this opportunity of saying that the newspaper accounts of the loss of the ship are throughout grossly inaccurate. The chief facts I will state, in a few words, from the deposition at the India House of one of the surviving officers. She struck at 5 P.M. Guns were fired immediately, and were continued to be fired. She was gotten off the rock at half-past-seven, but had taken in so much water, in spite of constant pumping, as to be water-logged. They had, however, hope that she might still be run upon Weymouth Sands, and with this view continued pumping and baling till eleven, when she went down. The long-boat could not be hoisted out, as, had that been done, there would have been no possibility of the ship being run aground. I have mentioned these things because the newspaper

¹ The quotation is from Young, *Night Thoughts*, VII, 205–17.

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accounts were such as tended to throw discredit on my brother's conduct and personal firmness, stating that the ship had struck an hour and a half before guns were fired, and that, in the agony of the moment, the boats had been forgotten to be hoisted out. We knew well this could not be; but for the sake of the relatives of the persons lost it distressed us much that it should have been said. A few minutes before the ship went down, my brother was seen talking with the first mate, with apparent cheerfulness; and he was standing on the hen-coop, which is the point from which he could overlook the whole ship, the moment she went down, dying as he had lived, in the very place and point where his duty stationed him. I must beg your pardon for detaining you so long on this melancholy subject; and yet it is not altogether melancholy, for what nobler spectacle can be contemplated than that of a virtuous man with a serene countenance in such an overwhelming situation? I will here transcribe a passage which I met with the other day in a review; it is from Aristotle's 'Synopsis of the Virtues and Vices'. 'It is,' says he, 'the property of fortitude not to be easily terrified by the dread of things pertaining to death; to possess good confidence in things terrible, and presence of mind in dangers; rather to prefer to be put to death worthily, than to be preserved basely; and to be the cause of victory. Moreover, it is the property of fortitude to labour and endure, and to make valorous exertion an object of choice. Further, presence of mind, a well-disposed soul, confidence, and boldness are the attendants on fortitude; and, besides these, industry and patience.' Except in the circumstance of making valorous exertion an 'object of *choice*' (if the philosopher alludes to general habits of character), my brother might have sat for this picture; but he was of a meek and retired nature, loving all quiet things. I remain, dear Sir George,

Your most affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

I am sadly afraid you will not be able to puzzle out your way through this Letter.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Dunmow, Essex.

MARCH 1805

MS.
K(—)

205. *W. W. to James Losh*¹

Grasmere, March 16th 1805.

My dear Losh,

The distress of mind under which we are at present labouring is not to be measured by any living person but one, and that is poor Coleridge, who is now far from us, at Malta. Our Brother was so modest and shy a man, that not a tenth part of his worth, above all, his Taste, Genius, and intellectual merits, was known to anybody but ourselves and Coleridge, who had an opportunity of seeing him familiarly during several months under our roof and at C.'s own house. C. knew what he was in himself and what he was to us; nobody else, not even our other Brothers, had or now have the faintest idea of it. John as a Sailor being accustomed to live with Men with whom he had little sympathy and who did not value or understand what he valued and having been from his earliest infancy of most lonely and retired habits (my Father in allusion to this part of his disposition used to call him Ibex, the shyest of all the beasts) had lived all his life with all the deepest parts of his nature shut up within himself. When he came to Grasmere somewhat better than five years ago he found in his Sister and me and Coleridge and in my Wife and a Sister of hers whom at that time he had an opportunity of seeing much of, all that was wanting to make him completely happy; accordingly he gave up his heart to us, and we had the unexpected delight of finding in him a Friend who had a perfect sympathy with all our pleasures. After staying eight months with us he left us to take the command of this unfortunate Ship: we had at that time little to live upon and he went to sea high in hope and heart that he should soon be able to make his Sister independant and contribute to any wants which I might have. He encouraged me to persist in the plan of life which I had adopted; I will work for you, was his language, and you shall attempt to do something for the world. Could I but see you with a green field of your own and a Cow and two or three other little comforts I should be happy. (Observe this was long before my marriage and when I had no thoughts of marrying and also when we had

¹ Printed by K as To Correspondent Unknown.

no hope about the Lowther debt.) He went to sea with these hopes and poor fellow instead of gaining anything he lost about £1000. We saw him (for the last time) in London at his return; he said to us where I have had one depressing thought in my own account, my ill success has made me think of you a thousand times. He went to sea again, with the same hope of being useful to us the ruling feeling of his heart, and was also unsuccessful though not quite in the same degree. Then came the lamentable voyage upon which he entered with far better grounded hopes: his bad success had roused him, and he had many powerful friends, got himself appointed to a voyage which by many was thought the best in the service, had an investment of £20,000, and had he returned he was next season to have had his choice of all the voyages in the service. He wrote to us from Portsmouth about 12 days before this disaster full of hopes saying that he was to sail tomorrow, of course at the time when we heard this deplorable news we imagined that he was as far on his voyage as Madeira. It was indeed a thunderstroke to us. The language which he held was always so encouraging, saying that Ships were in nine instances out of ten lost by mismanagement: he had indeed a great fear of Pilots and I have often heard him say that no situation could be imagined more distressing than that of being at the mercy of these men; oh, said he, it is a joyful time for us when we get rid of them. His fears alas! were too well founded, his own ship was lost while under the management of the Pilot, whether mismanaged by him or not I do not know; but know for certain, which is indeed our great consolation, that our dear Brother did all that man could do, even to the sacrifice of his own life. The newspaper accounts were grossly inaccurate, indeed that must have been obvious to any person who could bear to think upon the subject for they were absolutely unintelligible. There are two pamphlets upon the subject; one a mere transcript from the Paper, the other may be considered as to all important particulars as of authority, it is by a person high in the India house and contains the deposition of the surviving officers concerning¹ the loss of the Ship. The pamphlet I am told is most unfeelingly written, I have only seen an extract

¹ concerning: MS. containing

from it containing Gilpin's deposition, the 4th Mate. From this it appears that every thing was done that could be done under the circumstances, for the safety of the lives and the Ship: my poor Brother was standing on the hen-coop (which is placed upon the Poop and is in the most commanding situation in the Vessel) when she went down: and was thence washed overboard by a huge sea which sunk the Ship. He was seen struggling with the waves some time afterwards, having laid hold, it is said, of a rope. He was an excellent swimmer, but what could it avail in such a sea encumbered with his cloaths and exhausted in body as he must have been. He was seen talking with the 1st Mate with apparent cheerfulness a few minutes before the Ship went down. Such my dear Losh was the end of this brave and good man, if ever a human being existed who deserved to attain the end he had in view, this was the person. He had not one vice of his profession; never did I hear an oath or even an indelicate allusion from his mouth; he was pure as the purest woman. There is nothing remarkable in the courage or presence of mind which he shewed at his death, thousands would have done the same. But it is a noble object of contemplation that a man of his gentle and meek and happy temper, a man in the prime of health and strength (he was only 32 years of age) with every thing in prospect which could make life dear, beloved and honored to the height of love and honor by his nearest friends and kindred and respected and liked by everybody that knew him; that such a man leaving the anguish which he knew he would leave behind him, should nevertheless die calm and resigned; this is surely a noble spectacle. O! my friend I shall never forget him! and his image if my senses remain, will be with me at my last hour and I will endeavour to die as he did, and what is of still more consequence perhaps, to live as he did; for he was innocent as he was brave, his whole life was dignified by prudence and firmness and self-denial—as far as my knowledge goes never did a man live who had less to repent of than he. He was steady to his duty in all situations. I praise him in a manner that would have shocked him, but I fall far, far, below the truth.

For myself I feel that there is something cut out of my life

which cannot be restored, I never thought of him but with hope and delight, we looked forward to the time, not distant as we thought, when he would settle near us when the task of his life would be over, and he would have nothing to do but reap his reward. By that time I hoped also that the chief part of my labours would be executed and that I should be able to shew him that he had not placed a false confidence in me. I never wrote a line without a thought of giving him pleasure, my writings printed and manuscript were his delight and one of the chief solaces of his long voyages. But let me stop—I will not be cast down were it only for his sake I will not be dejected. I have much yet to do and pray God to give me the strength and power—his part of the agreement between us is brought to an end, mine continues and I hope when I shall be able to think of him with a calmer mind that the remembrance of him dead will even animate me more than the joy which I had in him living.

I wish you would procure the pamphlet I have mentioned; you may know the right one by its having a motto from Skakespeare from Clarence's dream; I wish you to see it that you may read G's statement and be enabled to correct the errors which they must have fallen into who have taken their ideas from the newspaper accounts. I have dwelt long, too long I fear upon this subject but I could not write to you upon anything else till I had unburthened my heart. We have great consolations from the sources you allude to but alas! we have much yet to endure. Time only can give us regular tranquillity, we neither murmur nor repine, but sorrow we must; we should be senseless else.

We have lost so much hope and gladsome thought, John who was almost perpetually in our minds was always there as an object of pleasure, never was presented to us in any other point of view; in this he differed from all our friends, from Coleridge in particular, in connexion with whom we have many melancholy, fearful and unhappy feelings, but with John it was all comfort and expectation and pleasure. We have lost him at a time when we are young enough to have been justified in looking forward to many happy years to be passed in his society and when we are too old to outgrow the loss.

(Unsigned.)

MARCH 1805

MS.
K(—)

206. D. W. to Jane Marshall

[Grasmere] Friday 16th March 1805¹

I summoned up my heart a few days ago and began with courage to write to Mrs. Rawson, intending also to write to you—but I could not, therefore I desired her to forward the letter to you after she had read it. I cannot rest till I have written, so I choose a time in which my thoughts are calm and settled, and I will endeavour to *keep in* the grief which gushes out of me so many times in the day. I will tell you wherein my consolation is, and all that I can to comfort your tender heart. My good and dear Friend, your letter was a soothing gift, it drew a flood of tears from us, while we sate round our melancholy fire, and after they had passed away, we were in some sort cheered by your sympathy—it does me good to weep for him: it does me good to find that others weep, and I bless them for it. Enough of this, it is not now the time, if I go on I shall do no better than before. Yet I know not what to write—it is with me when I write as when I am walking out in this vale once so full of joy. I can turn to no object that does not remind me of our loss. I see nothing that he would not have loved with me and enjoyed had he been by my side; and indeed, indeed my consolations rather come to me in gusts of feeling, than are the quiet growth of my mind. I know it will not always be so—the time will come when the light of the setting sun upon these mountain tops will be as heretofore a pure joy—not the same *gladness*, that can never be—but yet a joy even more tender. It will soothe me to know how happy *he* would have been could he have seen the same beautiful spectacle. I shall have him with me, and yet shall know that he is out of the reach of all sorrow and pain, can never mourn for us—his tender soul was awake to all our feelings—his wishes were intimately connected with our happiness. We know not then what anguish might have been his lot if he had lived longer—he was taken away in the freshness of his manhood, pure he was;—and innocent as a child, I may even say, for among the impure he lived uncontaminated. Never human being was more thoroughly modest, and his courage I

¹ 1805: miswritten by D. W. 1804.

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need not speak of, it served him in the hour of trial, he was seen 'speaking with apparent chearfulness to the first mate a few minutes before the ship went down', and when nothing more could be done he said 'the will of God be done', and I have no doubt when he felt that it was out of his power to save his life, he was as calm as before, if some thought of what we should endure did not awaken a pang. Our loss is not to be measured but by those who are acquainted with the nature of our pleasures and have seen how happily we lived together those eight months that he was under our roof. He loved solitude and he rejoiced in society—he would wander alone among these hills with his fishing-rod, or led on merely by the pleasure of walking, for many hours—or he would walk with William or me, or both of us, and was continually pointing out with a gladness which is seldom seen but in very young people something which perhaps would have escaped our observation, for he had so fine an eye that no distinction was unnoticed by him, and so tender a feeling that he never noticed anything in vain. Many a time has he called me out in an evening to look at the moon or stars, or a cloudy sky, or this vale in the quiet moonlight—but the stars and moon were his chief delight, he made of them his companions when he was at sea, and was never tired of those thoughts which the silence of the night fed in him. Then he was so happy by the fire-side, any little business of the house interested him, he loved our cottage, he helped us to furnish it, and to make the gardens—trees are growing now which he planted. Oh! my dear Jane! I must not go on. I do not in this way perform the task I assigned myself. He was with us when Mr. Marshall was here, and as I daresay he has repeated to you since his death, accompanied Mr. M. to Buttermere—he stayed with us till the 29th of September, having come to us about the end of January. During that time Mary Hutchinson, now Mary Wordsworth, stayed with us six weeks. John used to walk with her everywhere, and they were exceedingly attached to each other—so my poor sister mourns with us, not merely as we have lost one of the family who was so dear to William and me, but from tender love of John and an intimate knowledge of his virtues. Her hopes as well as ours were fixed on John—we never

thought of him but with hope and comfort, and this is now our sorrow—but at the same [time] it is our best consolation and will in the end be a never-failing source of pleasing contemplations. It is good for us to think upon the virtuous. I trust our hearts will be mended by what we know of his. The newspapers have given contradictory and unintelligible accounts of the dismal event—this was very harassing to us. We knew that our Brother would do his duty, of this we were confident—that he would not lose his presence of mind, or blunder, or forget, but we wanted to have all cleared up, to know *how* it was. This as far as concerned ourselves—and then for the sake of the relatives of those poor three hundred who went down with him we were greatly distressed. It cut us to the heart to think that their sorrow should be aggravated by a thought that his errors or weakness, or any other misconduct should have occasioned or increased the calamity. God be praised we are now satisfied in our own knowledge—we know how it was, and I hope that many of those who have mourned for their friends may have received such information as may have settled their minds also. It is ‘a memorandum respecting the Loss of the Earl of Abergavenny’ by Gilpin one of the mates which has been transcribed from a pamphlet and sent to us, which has explained to us the manner of the ship’s going down. There have been two narratives published, one of no value at all, the other, though I believe drawn up without much feeling, may in many respects be depended on, as it is done by a person high in the India House. I do not know the title but the motto is taken from Clarence’s Dream, by which you will know if you have the right one, for I wish you to send for it.

I am afraid I have written a letter that will give you pain in the reading for I have been so much affected with the thoughts of my poor Brother as I went along that I am sure I must have written what will affect you with fresh sorrow—do forgive me—I shall be better—I *am* better—I have walked out today and had less of anguish than I have ever had in any walk since we have been in our trouble. I nurse the baby and do what I can, I am even now comforted while I write to you, though I have been often scarcely able to see my paper.

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And now again my dearest Jane let me bless you for your letter. *Your* letter and Mrs. Rawson's have given me inexpressible consolation, the consolation which sympathy always affords. I should like very much to see you among your children. May they live to be blessings to you and each other! I was much affected by your having called your daughter by my name, especially as she has yours also. I cannot talk about coming to see you at present, for I cannot think of any separation from my Brother and sister. We do not think we shall stay long at Grasmere. Our house is too small for us and there is no other in the vale, so we must move at some time, and the sooner it is done the better for us as we now are. We shall most likely go southward, and we will endeavour to take that opportunity of visiting our friends at Halifax and you and Mr. Marshall but we do not talk of change and we shall find it hard to resolve.

Remember me affectionately to your Mother and Sisters. William joins with me in kindest regards to Mr. Marshall. May God bless you, my dear Friend. Believe me ever your affectionate friend.

D. Wordsworth

Write to me again I pray you.

My Brother Richard says that there is no reason to think that we any of us will suffer in our property. This is a great comfort to us for our poor John's sake, who I am sure would have one pleasing thought on that account when he knew that all he carried out with him would be lost. As for ourselves, we ventured nothing that we could not well have done without, nor would John for the world have taken a single hundred pounds of William's or mine at the hazard of depriving us of our independence. My Brother Richard lent him a considerable sum, but *he* could well have borne the loss. Christopher also, as I have since learnt had lent him all his property, but he would not have suffered from the loss, having a very sufficient income—but all is insured.

I send off this letter on Sunday. I can think of nothing but our dear departed Brother, yet I am very tranquil today—I honour him, and love him, and glory in his memory.

Far[ew]ell my dear dear Friend. I shall be very glad to hear

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from you—tell me about your children. Kiss them all for me, and clasp little Jane Dorothy to your heart. Do you continue to suckle her? Mary has not yet weaned our Dorothy. I know not that there is anything in this letter that was not in that I wrote to Mrs. Rawson. If there be you will not think it any trouble to transcribe it. Again God bless you!

Address: Mrs. John Marshall, Leeds, Yorkshire.

MS. *207. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere—Monday, March 17th [1805]

I know it will give you pleasure to see my handwriting again. God be praised, I am quiet and composed and able to write! but I must not give myself up to past things. Blessings be upon you, my dear and good Friend! for ever blessed will you be by me while my heart can beat! If my poor lost Brother could have known you I should have even yet had greater comfort in thinking of your goodness—but it could not be—it was the will of God that he should be taken away from all care and sorrow, and he has left behind with us what we shall never part from; the memory of his retired virtues, his modesty, his tenderness, his deep affections. Wherever we go we shall know what would have been John's sentiments and feelings, if he had been at our side—for he was true and constant as the light of heaven—he seemed to have been made for the best sort of happiness which is to be found in this world for his whole delight was in peace and Love and the beautiful works of this fair Creation. . . .¹ I cannot speak of him as he was—I must have done.

I take the pen again and resolve not to trust myself into the depths of our affliction. I must only say that I hope I shall in a little time profit as I ought to do from the many consolations which remain to us, above all from the solemn recollections which we have of our departed Brother. I have a task of my own to perform, and therein I must not be remiss, that of aiding my Sister to raise up the spirits of my dear Brother William, and contribute to make him fit to accomplish the works

¹ These dots are in the MS., they do not denote an omission.

he meditates. This is an awful thought, and trust me I will do my utmost. I have begun again to attend to the children; the quietness of the little Girl is very soothing to me, and I have great delight in her, but John is too boisterous. We walk out whenever the weather is tolerable—these walks feed our melancholy, but in the end they are tranquillizing, and we are the better for them—but this Vale is changed to us, it can never be what it *has been*, and as we cannot spend our days here the sooner we remove the better, for if we stay long we shall be attached to it by our painful feelings even more strongly than we have been heretofore by those of hope and gladness or fearless peace—and the parting will be a fresh sorrow, which if it were to happen within a few months would scarcely be felt as such.

Since I wrote the above I have been walking with my Brother. We were two hours in the open air, and the day was uncommonly delicious. We have had many fine days since we heard the dismal tidings; but sunshine and darkness, starlight and moonlight, calm weather and fierce winds were all doleful to us. As your tender sympathy suggested to you it would be, the placid weather which followed the lamentable sixth of February was beyond description melancholy. I had even a feeling of *joy* the first time I heard the wind in my bed after we heard the tidings—but why dwell upon these things? I am distressing you—and this morning we have had some chearful sensations, while we sate down together, talking of you and Coleridge, and all the time we thought of our beloved Brother.

I wish very much that we may see you here next Summer, for surely we shall not be here another—but oh! with what different views do I look forward to the time of our meeting, though with a more deep desire for it than ever. Sir George Beaumont's last letter to my Brother affected us all far more than I can express, nor will I attempt to speak of the reverence and love which is felt for him by all round our fire-side. I hope, that as we may expect warmer weather, he will have no return of his painful disease. Pray tell me if you have heard from your Sister lately—I often think of her. There are many parts of your late letters which I had not replied to. I hope I shall be able to write again in a little time and intermingle other thoughts

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with my melancholy. I will do it as soon as I can, and strive to recollect many things which I had intended speaking to you of. You asked after Southey's *Madoc*—it is printed but not published, and I do not know when it will be published. What a sad event for us is the Capture of the Malta Fleet! We may however be thankful that Coleridge himself was not with it.

I cannot write any more at present. My dear Friend, farewell. May God bless you! Make our kindest remembrances to Sir George and believe me ever your faithful and affectionate Friend.

Dorothy Wordsworth.

P.S. We have received the other half of the Bill.

I shall be very happy to receive a letter from you whenever you have leisure to write, and do not fail to speak of Sir George's health. Is your own health good? You have never told us. My Sister is tolerably well—happily she has not been obliged to wean Dorothy, which has been a great consolation to her and all of us. I am sure you will love the little Girl very much when you know her—she is a most interesting Child.

Tuesday morning.—I have received your kind letter—about half an hour ago my Sister brought it me. I was sitting in a green field in the Sunshine with your little Goddaughter on my knee, very tranquil and in a mood to feel the fullness of your kind deeds towards me without so much pain intermingled as I have always lately felt in thinking of any thing which would have given delight to our dear Brother. You were very good in writing so soon after you had heard from your Sister. All that you say to me of her is most interesting to me—how does it happen that she is removed from Geneva? I can read French familiarly, therefore if you will take the trouble to transcribe those parts of her letter to which you allude, when you are disposed to write to me, I should take it very kindly. Oh! my dear Friend, you measure my heart truly when you judge that I have at all times a deep sympathy with those who know what fraternal affection is. It has been the building up of my being, the light of my path. Our Mother, blessed be her Memory, was taken from us when I was only six years old. From her I know that I received much good that I can trace back to her.

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I was going to speak of my Mother and my Brothers, but I will not do it now—at some future time I shall be better able to look into these things, and I will tell you the little that I have to tell of my uneventful life. You do not speak of Sir George's health, so I trust he is as well as he usually is—how melancholy it is to our limited judgments that the best people seldom enjoy vigorous health except in the freshness of youth! This day is as delightful as yesterday, and when I read of your oppressive head-aches from town air, while the Birds were singing close to me, and the sweet air was like a healing balm to me, I sympathized with you in my very soul.

Adieu, my dear Friend—

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

*MS.*¹ *208. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*
K(—)

Grasmere—March 18th [1805]

I have long wished to write to you,² my dear Friend, I now venture to begin, impelled by many fears concerning your health. You were very poorly at the time your husband wrote to William, and he said it was your intention to write in a few days.—We have had no letter, and I cannot beat away the fear that illness has prevented you from writing—God grant that it may not be so!—My dear Friend what a struggle we have gone through! and how much sorrow have we not yet to endure! but I trust that the example of our dear Brother, who though

¹ MS. not in Clarkson Collection in the B. M. .

² On March 7 Mary W. had written to C. C.: 'We have preserved our health through this great trial far far better than our dearest friends could have hoped. Dear Dorothy looks very ill, but she has never been ill, and we have reason to bless God that her cough has entirely left her and though she is long in getting to sleep after she goes to bed, upon the whole her nights are good and her appetite is recovering. Dear Soul! I wish I could say the same for her spirits. . . . Our beloved Wm! my dear friend you would love him more than ever, could you but know how he has exerted himself to comfort us. . . . Many of the shrubs in the garden were planted by his (J.'s) hand and I dare say there is not one but when it was put in the ground dear John was in the thoughts of the planter. John was the first who led me to everything that I love in this neighbourhood. Sara is at Kendal, but we expect her back in a few days, to stay some weeks. Dorothy will write as soon as she dare trust herself to address you.'

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taken from our earthly sight is for ever with us and will be so to our dying day, that his example will teach us to submit in all calmness to the divine Will—and that the memory of his happy and innocent life, his joy in all good and lovely things will help us again to take pleasure in the same objects as before and with a more holy feeling though it can never be so gladsome. Blessings be with him for evermore! his lovely happy ways. Oh my friend! I must have done—I could have had no pleasure greater than that of pouring out my heart to you because you are one of those who knew something of John's greatest merits which were never known but to a very few, and you can sympathise with us to the full contentment of our dejected hearts, but I have forborne to do it for fear of distressing you, and now, weak creature that I am! I have been unable to write with calmness, but I have much comfort for you, we are all in tolerable health. Mary continues to suckle Dorothy and the Child thrives—I have taken up some of my old employments. I [ri]se about 7 in the morning and dress and feed the Children, and I find great comfort in Dorothy, she is such a little gentle creature. John is over boisterous, but I manage him as well as I can. We expect Sara H tomorrow to stay some time with us.—She is now at Kendal.—Farewell! my dear Friend, let us hear from you, or if you find it too much for your spirits or strength to write to us Mr. Clarkson will just inform us how you are. God bless you both and your dear Child!

believe me ever your faithful and affectionate Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth

Address: Mrs Clarkson, Purfleet, near London.

MS.

209. W. W. to R. W.

Grasmere March 19th 1805.

My dear Richard,

Your Letter relieved us from great anxiety: we knew not what you might have suffered from such a dreadful shock, and from seeing so many persons as you must have done connected with this deplorable calamity. God defend any Body from suffering

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what we have suffered, and still do suffer. No words can express the love which we had of poor John, and the daily and perpetual pleasure which we had in looking forward to the time when he would be at liberty to settle among us. He loved everything which we did, and everything about us here incessantly reminds us of him and our irreparable loss. But I will not distress you, for you can give us no relief.

Dorothy is recovering her appetite from which I judge that she suffers less constantly in mind. She is not strong and it has brought her very low; Mary also loved John with her whole soul.

I addressed a Letter to John at your Chambers about 2 months I think before he sailed. Did he, do you know, ever get this Letter? I ask, because in his last letter to us written from Portsmouth there is nothing from which I can collect that he ever received it. The chief object of the Letter was to request that he would pay for me £105 to a Mr Sotheby of Upper Seymour Street London. This was a Debt of Coleridge which I engaged to pay to Mr Sotheby, viz. £100 with interest for one year. Coleridge hoped to be able to remit this money from Malta before it became due, and I expected to have had by the present Convoy which has been taken a remittance for that purpose. I suppose John as he made no mention of this Letter had never received it. Would you have the goodness to pay for me immediately the above sum to Mr Sotheby, as it is some time it has been due. Mr Sotheby is a man of fortune, and will easily be found in Upper Seymour Street Portman Square, SOTHEBY is the name. If any memorial of dear John should be recovered from the Ship, Box writing-desk, telescope, or any thing else great or small, for God's sake let it be preserved for us. My heart is so full when I think of him that if I cannot calm my grief, I am sure it will have a serious effect upon my health and strength. He did not know how I loved and honoured him, and how often he was in my thoughts. How were the officers saved who were saved? did they climb the shrouds before the ship went down or how?—I know it was his duty to be the last person in the ship to think about himself, and most likely this sense of his duty was the cause of the loss of his life. Farewell! I am sometimes half superstitious, and think that as the number

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of us is now broken some more of the set will be following him. I used always to think that John and you would be the longest lived of any of us. God Bless you my dear Brother! best love from Mary and Dorothy.

yours most affectionately
W. Wordsworth

Address: Mr Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS.

210. W. W. to Richard Sharp

K(—)

Grasmere, March 19, 1805.

My dear Friend,

You have often been in my thoughts lately, and I have often thought of writing to you, but my heart failed me. No doubt your thoughts, too, must frequently have turned this way; I half hoped you might have learned something concerning the Ship, or my Brother's conduct, which you might deem consolatory enough to encourage you to write to us. I have now and then in my distress, turning here and turning there, a thought of this kind, and then I said to myself, What can he write, or what can anybody write to us?

Poor, blind Creatures that we are! how he hoped and struggled, and we hoped and struggled, to procure him this voyage. He wrote to us from Portsmouth in the highest spirits, and then came those dismal tidings! Oh, my dear Friend, no words can express the anguish which we have endured. Our Brother was the pride and delight of our hearts, never present to our minds but as an object of hope and pleasure; we had no expectation in life a thousand part so pleasing as that of his coming to live among us the life he loved, and reap the reward of his long privations.

I will not speak of him now, but if you and I ever see each other again, you will permit me to tell you what he was, and how he loved those that were about me, and what it was his wish to have done for us. I am afraid you will find us much changed when you come again to Grasmere. My sister has been stricken to the heart, and looks dismally ill; but I hope time will

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calm us. Let us see you this summer if possible. We shall make a little tour into Scotland, if we can muster courage; but alas! every place and scheme at this time only presents to us variety of sorrow.

I broke my Watch the other day by letting it fall; will you be so good as to send your servant (it is now on its way to you) to the Maker's with it to have it mended: and, if I dont request some body to call for it before, to bring it down with you. Farewell, I should have liked to have written you a long Letter but I cannot.

Your sincere friend,
W. Wordsworth.

I forgot to speak about Mrs. Ws Brother whom I mentioned to you in a Letter some little time ago. When I look back upon that Letter it seems as if I had requested you to recommend him to some place, if so, I did very wrong, and had no intention to do so, I only wished that if you should hear of any place that you would be so good as to inform us.

Address: Rich^d Sharp Esq^{re}, No. 17, Mark Lane, London.

MS. 211. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere 28th March 1805

My dear Friend,

Yesterday we received a letter from Coleridge, dated Malta 19th January, in which he tells us that his health is restored and he will return in March—but I will extract from his letter—it is very short. I need not say how consolatory it has been to us. He says: 'I send this to you by way of Gibraltar (ah! with what faint hopes of its arrival!) That good Man Major Adye! he is dead—and all his papers burnt as plague-papers, and there perished my fine Travels addressed to Sir George Beaumont. But enough of the melancholy. First then, I am in good health. Secondly, it is my fixed determination to leave this place in March, but whether by the Convoy, or overland through Trieste I must be decided by circumstances.' This letter has probably come by some ship that has escaped from the French in the

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late capture. Probably you may have heard from him by the same ship. It is a very grievous [thing] that the journal should be lost. At another time we should have poured out heavy lamentations. It is a loss that cannot be repaired. I wish he may not hear of our Brother's death till he reaches England, but I am afraid he will hear the tidings at Gibraltar, if he comes by sea, and if by Land they will certainly reach him on the Continent.

Yesterday's post brought us a letter from my eldest Brother in which he informs us that the Body of our dearest John had been found by dragging, and was buried at Wyke near Weymouth. This is a great comfort to us—his grave is a resting-place for our thoughts—the end of all in this world. We have nothing more to hope or expect in connection with him but the time when we shall go together to visit the spot. My dear Friend, I am much comforted—I have many happy thoughts. I have not time to write more. Do let me hear from you—I hope you will see by my next letter that I am not altogether unworthy of the example he has left us. I trust I shall be able to summon up some part of the same fortitude which my Brother exhibited in his last moments.

We are all pretty well. I hope Sir George continues well, and that your head is reconciled to London. How long do you mean to stay there? We all join in affectionate remembrances.

God bless you! believe me ever

Your sincere Friend,
Dorothy Wordsworth

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

MS. *212. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere—11th April. 1805

I have been exceedingly affected by your last letter, which I have read many times over with sentiments of delight and self-congratulation on the possession of your friendship. True it is that the agony which follows on the death of those in whom our hope has been could only close in settled gloom and heaviest

disappointment, were it not for those elevating thoughts of a better life and a more glorious nature which the contemplation of the virtues of the departed raises up in us with a strength unknown before. Yes, my dear Friend, I think of my Brother who is taken from us with tranquillity and frequent joy unutterable. His exalted Nature has not perished—but Oh! far better—and we who remain on Earth shall have him with us, a perpetual presence. I will not harass your feelings by attempting to lay open the workings of my heart—it is enough to say that thence have come repose and consolation. At some future time, when our sorrow is not so fresh in your mind, I may relate to you all the particulars respecting our dear Brother, which we have heard from the surviving sharers in that lamentable distress.

It will give you great pleasure to hear that my Brother has resumed his old employments, having taken up again the Task of his life, though not in the regular way. Till he has unburthened his heart of its feelings on our loss he cannot go on with other things, and it does him good to speak of John as he was, therefore he is now writing a poem upon him. I should not say a *poem* for it is a *part* of the Recluse. I doubt not, when this labour of love is finished, that he will go on with more firmness and devotion than he has ever yet done, and if it please God to grant him life I trust he will perform something that may mend many hearts, and that his beloved Brother would have approved. My Sister is very well—she goes on an admirable nurse, and does not talk about weaning the Child. Johnny has had a bad cold which has made him require the nursing of a Baby. We have also been busily employed in transcribing some of my Brother's manuscript Poems, the work I was first able to do after John's death. We also walk out frequently. I mention these trifles that you may judge how much better we are going on than some time ago. I thank you for your Sister's letter. It is most interesting and affecting—indeed I cannot express how very much I am interested about her. At some time or other perhaps you may feel yourself [able] to enter into some of the particulars of her past life—but the subject may be too painful—do not therefore [im]pute this as a request, only an intimation that you

cannot write on a subject more pleasing to me than your dear Sister. Much as we should wish to see you in the North next Summer, we cannot bear the idea of your coming for so short a time merely to see us, especially as we have such miserable accommodations for you in our own house; therefore I will not talk of it; but I hope we shall meet somewhere ere long. We have entirely made up our minds upon quitting Grasmere, as soon as ever Coleridge has fixed upon and procured a proper residence for himself. You will see him in London, most likely, therefore I wish you would talk to him on the subject, and urge the absolute necessity of his not spending another winter at Keswick; for I am sure that you and Sir George cannot but be as well convinced as we are of the danger of his continuing long in this damp though beautiful nook of the Island. I know that he will be very unwilling to move, but what you say to him will have great weight, and perhaps you may be able in some sort to guide his choice. We had a letter from Mrs. Coleridge a few days ago—she is still at Liverpool. You mentioned Mr. Southey in one of your letters, and that he did not please you—he made the same impression upon me the first time I saw him, but afterwards, being in the same house with him a few days, I saw much in him that was very good, and I liked him. I cannot say that afterwards he improved upon me, and I seemed to find in him nothing of the dignity or enthusiasm of the Poet's Character. So I felt respecting him when my Brother died. At that time he came over to us, and he was so tender and kind that I loved him all at once—he wept with us in our sorrow, and for that cause I think I must always love him. I am going to read the Life of Cowper, and the last Volume of letters published since—I expect great pleasure from the []¹—the Man appears so very amiable whenever I have dipped into them. In reading Lady Mary W. Montagu's letters, which we have had lately, I continually felt a *want*—I had not the least affection for her. This makes me think of poor Mrs. Klopstock. Of her letters I have only read the extract which you sent me, and one letter in a Review, that in which she describes the progress of her attachment to her husband; and *who* could read that letter

¹ The original is here much torn by the seal.

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without loving her? I do not think that a more touching picture was ever given of a tender heart in the possession of happiness and innocence. I wish I could tell you more about Klopstock himself. I was only with him two or three hours, and as I could not speak a word of German, and have only a miserable stock of French, and his French was even worse than mine, I had little of his conversation. What I was chiefly pleased with in him was his great chearfulness, even liveliness, under the burthen of old age and many diseases. His countenance disappointed me; but this might be owing to his having a full-powdered tye Wig with a high *Toupee* (I believe the word is spelt so) I mean a high hill of hair sloping back from the forehead—a head-dress which I think scarcely any dignity of expression could stand out against, when the face is puckered up with wrinkles as his was, and bearing the traces also of long sickness. If I had heard of his first Wife, or read her letters at that time I think I should have been able to give you a better account of him. I am sure he must have been a most amiable Man. My Brother desires me to say that he intends writing to Sir George very soon. He thanks him for his very kind letter. Did I tell you that Coleridge desired that letters might be written to him to be at the Courier Office by the first of May? I strive to keep down all thoughts of his return; but at the end of this month we shall hope continually with trembling. I wish, I wish the work of his coming were over.

Adieu, my dear Friend, believe me

Your faithful and affectionate

Dorothy Wordsworth.

P.S. Where is your Sister?

I am exceedingly glad that Sir George continues to be tolerably well.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

MS. 213. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

15th April, 1805—Grasmere—

My dear Friend,

I cannot resist the desire I feel of transcribing a letter for you which we have received from a Mr Evans, who with his daughter

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and niece left the Abergavenny in a boat about three hours before she sank. All further particulars which we have learnt from the Survivors, respecting our Brother's conduct during the last hours of his life I will reserve for some future time, when your sympathy shall be mellowed down; and I can with more steadiness fix my mind upon the consolations which are left to us in our Family and dear Friends, and in his innocent life *so ended*. I send you Mr Evans' letter that you may see what impression my Brother made upon those who were with him in any close connection, though for so short a time—it will be a confirmation of our testimony which might seem to be too partial. Mr Evans had been on board the ship I believe about a fortnight. We had heard that he and his Family had spoken of our poor John with so much tenderness that William ventured to write to Mr Evans to beg him to communicate any facts that he could respecting the last few hours that he was on board. I will write down the whole of the letter as every part of it is connected with the affectionate feelings which my Brother's goodness excited.

Mr Evans' letter—

'The delay attending the receipt of your affecting and afflicting letter has been, and could only be the cause of my silence (as I persuade myself you will believe) regarding a subject which has left indelible impressions on my mind, and which justly and naturally engages so poignantly your feelings.

Captain Wordsworth (a cousin of ours to whom my Brother succeeded in the command of the Abergavenny D. W.) will do me the justice to manifest how deeply I have been afflicted by past events, unconnected with what is deemed personal, and can, as I most truly do, participate, and greatly, in the sufferings of the Family of so estimable and respectable a Character as your late much lamented Brother, whose conduct towards my Family and myself endeared him to us when living, and whose memory, when no more, is and will ever be dear to us.

If I were to write all that to us appeared interesting relating to your Brother during the period we were in the unfortunate Ship, I should have to communicate the almost hourly occurrences of the day from our Embarkation to our providential

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escape. Sea-sickness confining my Family to the cabin, your Brother was generally with us, except when the important duties of his station engaged his time, and I observed on all occasions an anxious desire to promote the comfort and happiness of all under his protection. He was sanguine in his expectation of a speedy voyage; and on his future prospects we were accustomed to dwell.—His wish was to proceed as a single ship, but the orders regarding a separation from the Fleet were too strict to be disobeyed, which we mutually lamented, and this adherence to his orders, resisting the temptation of self-interest was the cause of our being led into the danger which proved fatal to so many. It was the well-founded expectation of having a successful voyage, that he should in consequence be enabled to retire from the Service and live with his Family (as he fondly expressed himself) that animated every exertion. And in all his conduct, of which I was the witness, I only observed steadiness, judgment and ability, and in the serious hour of danger firmness and resolution, which to the last he manfully maintained.

It may be conceived that the mild and reflecting character of your Brother was not so well calculated for the scenes he had to encounter as others who had less feeling, which imposes the appearance of more energy; but as far as I can judge, he tempered his character with qualities that rendered him equal to the arduous struggles of the profession he had adopted.

My Daughter and Niece would most gladly offer every consolation in their power to the amiable sister of one whose kindness and attention to them they are proud to acknowledge, earnestly hoping that some opportunity may offer that they may evince their sentiments more than by mere professions, and are also grateful for your kind wishes. I trust you will not hesitate to mention if I can be useful to you, and that you will allow me to assure you that on all occasions I shall be happy to testify the zeal and truth with which I am, dear Sir,

Your Sincere &c. &c.

P.S. I cannot omit mentioning the last words of your Brother to me when I was quitting the Ship, and was over the side—he came to me and emphatically said, “God bless you!”

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My dear Friend, you will see from this letter how much sweetness there was in his nature. It is delightful to think of it. A spirit of pure joy he was animated by innocent hope—his great merits were known to none but those who could see him the day through, and with them he was the most social being (*social in heart*) that ever lived—his habits from childhood were shy and lonely in the extreme, so that if he had not had so much dignity of character he would to most have appeared odd. But enough—I am sure you have joy in thinking of him or I would not have said so much. I ought to have told you that Captain Wordsworth was in London when the ship was lost, and had talked much with Mr Evans and his Family. Captain W. lives in the neighbourhood of Penrith.

I wish earnestly that you may not have left London when Coleridge arrives. Do what I can I am haunted with fears about him—fears connected with dangers by Sea which are not to be driven away—added to our old store respecting his miserable health. Southey's *Madoc* is published. He is sitting in the next room with my Brother—he came yesterday and stays till tomorrow. I hope I shall hear from you soon—I mean I hope you will write as soon as you have leisure and inclination, for if you are very long silent I shall grow uneasy about you. We all join in kind[est] remembrances—Believe me ever your affectionate Friend

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

MS.

214. W. W. to Richard W.

Grasmere, April 16th, 1805.

My dear Richard,

I had been over at Captain Wordsworth's when I received your Letter, and had derived much consolation from [the] account which he gave me. It appears that our ever to be lamented Brother did as you said every thing which man could do: and was placed in such a situation that he could not have been saved consistent with his duty till after the Ship was gone to the bottom: it further appears that after the ship was down

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he must have struggled with great exertion to save his life having been seen by Gilpin no less a time than what Gilpin supposes to have been five minutes after the Ship was sunk. Gilpin calling as loud as he could threw a rope to him which fell close beside him but he was then almost dead. It seems impossible to me that he could have struggled so long as five minutes in such a sea and on so excessive cold a night, but it must have been a considerable time or Gilpin could not have supposed it to be so long as five minutes. I now mention it to you because I feel satisfaction in thinking that the same undaunted courage and presence of mind which kept him faithful to his Post as long as the Ship was above water did not desert him to the last, but that having done all that could be done for others, he was when the proper time came equally true to himself. This is a great comfort to me: he went a brave and innocent Spirit to that God from whom I trust he will receive his reward.

Dorothy is better much, though I am sure the time will never come when she can fairly be said to have got the better of it. I mean the feeling of the loss will never depart from her.

I wish very much the money could be paid to Mr. Sotheby immediately. A Letter has been received from Coleridge, he is returning and the money will be repaid on his arrival. Is Christopher in Town, our best love if he is. Dorothy wishes to hear from him, tell him so. I am better in health than I was when I last wrote. Farewell. God bless you my dear Brother. Kindest love from Dorothy and Mary.

Yours affectionately

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr. Wordsworth, Staple Inn, London.

MS. *215. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*

K(—)

[pm April 19. 1805]

My dear Friend,

We received your letter yesterday evening. I write to tell you that you cannot have Mr. William King's house, for, as Charles Lloyd has told us he has engaged it again and I know from

Mrs Luff that he intends staying another half year at Ambleside.—We are exceedingly glad that you like the notion of coming to Robert Newton's house, for, in the first place I do not think there is another to be hired, and in the second—I am sure you could not be so comfortable any where else, or even derive all the benefit which we expect from your being in the North if you were so far from us as at Ambleside. Consider what a business it is to go 3 miles and a half for you who are out of health *in any way* and for us who are not very strong (and have two children) to *walk*! At Robert Newton's we can be together more or less every day—if we have but half an hour out with the children we need never come home without having spoken to you, besides Mary and I generally divide the care of the children. She has them one half of the day, I the other, now how nice it would be to bring Dorothy and spend the morning with you. Tom might either come to our house to play with John or they might play together in the Churchyard and about your doors. I need say no more, you will see how comfortably we might enjoy each other's [*seal*]. I believe I did not tell you that Mrs Newton will supply you with milk and butter.—I have great pleasure in thinking that you may see Miss Lamb, do not miss it if you can possibly go without injury to yourself. They are the best good creatures—blessings be with them! they have sympathised in our sorrow as tenderly as if they had grown up in the same town with us and known our beloved John from his childhood. Charles has written to us the most consolatory letters, the result of diligent and painful inquiry of the survivors of the wreck,—for this we must love him as long as we have breath. I think of him and his sister every day of my life, and many times in the day with thankfulness and blessings. Talk to dear Miss Lamb about coming into this country and let us hear what she says of it. I cannot express how much we all wish to see her and her Brother while we are at Grasmere.—We look forward to Coleridge's return with fear and painful hope—but indeed I dare not look to it—I think as little as I can of him. Oh my dear friend my heart seems to be shut against worldly hope! Our poor John was the life of the best of all our hopes. I seek to be resigned to the Will of God, and find my comfort in his

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innocent life and noble death. These contemplations strengthen my inner convictions of the glory of our Nature, and that he is now in blessedness in peace.—Farewell my dear Friend believe me ever yours.

D. Wordsworth.

We were very sorry that you should be prevented from writing by weakness. I trust however that we shall make you strong. We are all pretty well. Sara leaves us on Thursday, a great loss to us. I have written in great haste. Of course you will write as soon as possible, telling us whether we must *engage* the house or not.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson, Joseph Hardcastle Esquire, Hatcham House, New Cross, Deptford, Kent.

MS. 216. W. W. to Sir George Beaumont

M(—) G(—) C(—) K(—)

Grasmere, May 1st, 1805.

My dear Sir George,

I have wished to write to you every day this long time, but I have also had another wish which has interfered to prevent me—I mean the wish to resume my poetical labours; time was stealing away fast from me and nothing done and my mind still seeming unfit to do anything. At first I had a strong impulse to write a poem that should record my Brother's virtues, and be worthy of his memory. I began to give vent to my feelings, with this view, but I was overpowered by my subject and could not proceed: I composed much, but it is all lost except a few lines, as it came from me in such a torrent that I was unable to remember it; I could not hold the pen myself, and the subject was such that I could not employ Mrs. Wordsworth or my Sister as my amanuensis. This work must therefore rest awhile till I am something calmer; I shall, however, never be at peace till, as far as in me lies, I have done justice to my departed Brother's memory. His heroic death (the particulars of which I have now accurately collected from several of the survivors) exacts this from me, and still more his singularly interesting character, and virtuous and innocent life.

Unable to proceed with this work, I turned my thoughts again to the Poem on my own life, and you will be glad to hear that I have added 800 lines to it in the course of last week. Two books more will conclude it. It will be not much less than 9000 lines,—not hundred but thousand lines long,—an alarming length! and a thing unprecedented in literary history that a man should talk so much about himself. It is not self-conceit, as you will know well, that has induced me to do this, but real humility; I began the work because I was unprepared to treat any more arduous subject, and diffident of my own powers. Here, at least, I hoped that to a certain degree I should be sure of succeeding, as I had nothing to do but describe what I had felt and thought; therefore could not easily be bewildered. This might certainly have been done in narrower compass by a man of more address, but I have done my best. If, when the work shall be finished, it appears to the judicious to have redundancies, they shall be lopped off, if possible; but this is very difficult to do, when a man has written with thought; and this defect, whenever I have suspected it or found it to exist in any writings of mine, I have always found incurable. The fault lies too deep, and is in the first conception. If you see Coleridge before I do, do not speak of this to him, as I should like to have his judgment unpreoccupied by such an apprehension. I wish much to have your further opinion of the young Roscius,¹ above all of his 'Hamlet'. It is certainly impossible that he should understand the character, that is, the composition of the character. But many of the sentiments which are put into Hamlet's mouth he may be supposed to be capable of feeling, and to a certain degree of entering into the spirit of some of the situations. I never saw *Hamlet* acted myself, nor do I know what kind of a play they make of it. I think I have heard that some parts which I consider as among the finest are omitted; in particular, Hamlet's wild language after the ghost has disappeared. The Players have taken intolerable liberties with Shakespeare's plays, especially with *Richard the Third*, which, though a character admirably conceived, and drawn, is in some scenes bad enough in Shakespeare himself; but the play, as it is now acted, has always

¹ V. Letter 186.

appeared to me a disgrace to the English stage. *Hamlet*, I suppose, is treated by them with more reverence. They are both characters far, far above the abilities of any actor whom I have ever seen. Henderson¹ was before my time, and, of course, Garrick.

We are looking anxiously for Coleridge; perhaps he may be with you now. We were afraid that he might have had to hear other bad news of our Family, as Lady Beaumont's little God-daughter has lately had that dangerous complaint, the Croup, particularly dangerous here, where we are 18 miles from any medical advice on which we can have the least reliance. Her case has been a mild one, but sufficient to alarm us much, and Mrs. Wordsworth and her aunt have undergone much fatigue in sitting up, as for nearly a fortnight she had very bad nights. She yet requires much care and attention.

Is your building going on? I was mortified that the sweet little valley of which you spoke some time ago was no longer in the possession of your family;² it is the place, I believe, where that illustrious and most extraordinary man, Beaumont the Poet, and his Brother, were born. One is astonished when one thinks of that man having been only eight-and-twenty years of age, for I believe he was no more, when he died. Shakespeare, we are told, had scarcely written a single play at that age. I hope, for the sake of Poets, you are proud of these men.

Lady Beaumont mentioned some time ago that you were painting a picture from *The Thorn*, is it finished? I should like to see it; the poem is a favourite with me, and I shall love it the better for the honour you have done it. We shall be most happy to have the other drawing which you promised us some time ago. The dimensions of the Applethwaite one are 8 inches high, and a very little above ten broad; this, of course, exclusive of the margin.

I am anxious to know how your health goes on: we are better

¹ John Henderson (1747–85), 'the Bath Roscius', made his first appearance on the stage at Bath as Hamlet (1772); in London he first appeared in 1777, as Shylock. His other most famous impersonations were Sir Giles Overreach and Falstaff, and his recitation of *John Gilpin* was widely popular. In public estimation he was second only to Garrick.

² Grace-Dieu, the original family seat of the Beaumonts, where John Beaumont (1583–1627), author of *Bosworth Field*, and Francis Beaumont (1584–1616), the dramatist, were born.

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than we had reason to expect. When we look back upon this Spring it seems like a dreary dream to us. But I trust in God that we shall yet 'bear up and steer right onward'.¹

Farewell. I am, your affectionate friend,

W. Wordsworth.

My sister thanks Lady Beaumont for her Letter, the short one of the other day, and hopes to be able to write soon. Have you seen Southey's *Madoc*? We have it in the house, but have deferred reading it, having been too busy with the child. I should like to know how it pleases you.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Grosvenor Square, London.

MS. 217. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere, May 4th, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I received both your letters yesterday. I must first of all set you at ease respecting the postage of those sent from the Excise Office, all of which have come with the red mark, and I *believe* as free of expense as all your other letters. This I *know* however that one of them which I received lately was not charged; for my Sister at the time paid for some others which came by the same post; but I cannot answer for the former letters, for we only pay for our letters in general once in two or three months, but as I said I believe they have all come free. Tomorrow we intend going to Ambleside to inquire if any charge was made for the last (which came yesterday) and if not, in addition to the red marks and our never having had the least reason to suspect that we were called upon to pay for them, it will be a proof that they had all come free. And I must add that I should certainly have informed you if, with my knowledge, those letters had been charged, because I knew that you believed they were not. You have often paid the postage when you have written, and this has given me no uneasiness (though I have wished that you were always in the way of Franks) because I know that a shilling is of less consequence to you than to me, and still more because you would not have corresponded with me with the

¹ Milton, Sonnet to Cyriac Skinner on his Blindness.

same ease upon any other terms. I was hurt that you should speak of your letters as being of so little worth, and wished that you could have seen how chearfully I should have paid for all of them, and how much true delight they have given me.

We wish very much to hear more of the Girl whose verses you have sent us, for they have interested us exceedingly. The command of language and versification is really surprizing, and there is, I think, a great deal of fancy, and of the eye of a feeling being in the Fairy pastoral. Titania's speech at the beginning is very pretty, and these lines

‘Then like down from thistles borne
Intermingle with the breeze’

and the idea of hiding in the bubbles of the water are exceedingly pleasing—indeed there is so much to admire, considering it as the work of a child, that I do not know where to stop. She could not have thought of stealing the golden rings from the tail of a wasp without a rare Fancy, and a mind delighting in looking at and seeking after beautiful objects. There is a childishness about the poem, the conception, the manner of it, the little Fairy Green etc. that makes one *love* the Girl and her verses. I could have kissed her for giving the Fairies a cake. I hope you have some influence over her parents; if so you will use it, I am sure, in endeavouring to keep her out of the way of being spoiled; and above all take care that her productions are not printed and published as wonders. Should this be done, farewell all purity of heart, all solitary communion with her own thoughts for her own independent delight! She will never do good more. I wish she would keep from blank verse, but perhaps she cannot do wrong in aiming as her inclination leads her—she will soon find her feelings flow more easily into Rhyme, that it is more delightful to her to compose it, and that consequently she will be more successful. Where has she been educated? If she is a London Child she must have lived at times in the Country. Has she been at School? Pray tell us all you know of her.

We have had Southey's *Madoc* in the house more than a fortnight, and have done no more than admire the elegant title page and printing of the Book; for, as you will have heard by my Brother's letter to Sir George, we have had a sick Baby to

attend and watch, which has kept us very anxious and uneasy, and left us not enough of leisure to do the poem justice. Dorothy is now we hope quite well, and we have fixed on this evening to begin; for we intend to read it aloud, and therefore that is our time when the children are asleep, for we can never be gathered together, all three of us, in perfect quietness for any number of hours in the course of the day. My Sister and I divide the business of nursing, and when it is fine weather we have the children continually out of doors, by which means there is quiet for those within, but in wet weather we suffer much inconvenience in our small house, for though we do not keep the children in the same room in which those who are not attending to them are used to sit, yet their noise is heard in every corner of the house. We have the *Lay of the last Minstrel* and have read it with great pleasure. It is certainly very entertaining, but as you observe the narrative is often obscure, and there is a want of harmony, and of beautiful passages to remember, and turn to again. I like the beginning exceedingly, the introduction of the Minstrel, and the Costume of Branksome Hall. When we were in Scotland we spent several days in company with Mr Scott—we were at his house, he limped by our side through the groves of Roslin, went with us along the shores of Tiviot and the Tweed, led us to Melross Abbey, and pointed out every famous hill, and told some tale of every old Hall we passed by. His local attachments are more strong than those of any person I ever saw—his whole heart and soul seem to be devoted to the Scottish Streams, Yarrow and Tweed, Tiviot and the rest of them, of which we hear in the Border Ballads, and I am sure that there is not a story ever told by the fire-sides in that neighbourhood that he cannot repeat, and many more that are not so familiar. He is a man of very sweet manners, mild, cordial and chearful. I have spoken of his limping, but perhaps you do not know that he is lame. I believe he has been so from his birth—he is very stout and tall, but I think does not look healthy.

I sincerely hope that you will not have left London when Coleridge arrives, not that I think he will stay long there, but for the comfort and pleasure of all of you. I know how he will tremble when he enters the door of the Courier Office, and what

a joy it will be to him to receive a letter from Sir George saying that you are in Town. I am very much afraid that the shock which my Brother's death would give him, and the melancholy and fear which he would afterwards have on our account, may have injured his health. O my dear Lady Beaumont I shall be thankful when he is off the sea, and once again upon English ground. Since he parted from us so much hope has been cut out of my heart that whatever I look at I feel the difference. When I do not seem to know it I am sensible of my loss. I never again can have a *perfect*—that is an unchastized—joy in this world. You understand me—I did not know what sorrow was till now, which made me over secure in what I loved and rejoiced in, and think it too good and too perfect. God be praised that my Brother John was given to us! and I do not murmur that he was taken away. I have long been able to say to myself that I shall never see him more,—and to think of him with pleasure as no longer of this world—but I must stop—Oh! my dear Friend, you have been good in listening. I know not what I am doing to give you pain now—I cannot see the paper for my tears. . . .¹ I take the pen again—it does not look like composure and tranquillity thus to be led away—but believe me I have done a great deal—I keep myself constantly employed and seek after chearful thoughts, for the sake both of the living and the dead. I am never, I am sure, two minutes in the day without some image of my Brother John—how should it be otherwise? for he loved everything that is dear to me: but I think this constant presence of him, which I have never striven against, has done more to calm me than anything else. It is very delightful to me to perceive how you have caught hold of the merits of his character, and what love you seem to bear for his memory. Your application of the passage from Addison affected me very much. Yes, my dear Friend, if we had not a faith that the best are selected for sorrow and affliction as to the 'post of honour', to be thereby rendered the more perfect in another state, how could we bear to live here after the first pleasure of youth is gone!

I have written a long letter. When I took the paper I hesitated between this sheet and a smaller, but I decided to take this by

¹ . . . So the MS.—no omission.

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saying 'I need not fill it all, and I *will not*'. I must tell you that I was vexed with myself after I had sent off my last letter for asking you to write to me soon. I have had little experience of a London life, and none of such a life as you lead in London, therefore I did not think what I was doing, but I recollected afterwards that I had been very unreasonable, and that I ought rather frequently to make an apology for the length of my letters. Lady M. W. Montague when she writes to her Daughter *in London* scarcely ever concludes a letter without begging excuses for its length and expressing fears that she may not have time to read it. I might have gathered some instruction from this, and at least have thought you might not have much time to spare for *writing*, though snatches and odd moments will do well enough for *reading* a letter.

I am going to spend the afternoon with my Sister and the Children in the Orchard—it is as warm as summer—but, alas! our garden is not what it used to be! it has neither been cleaned nor dug—and the shrubs are run wild. We could not turn our eyes to it but with pain. I have only been three times at the orchard seat of moss. We have now set our faces to it, and intend having a gardener next week—and I am going this afternoon to the seat. Adieu—I wish I could write a long letter more legibly. My Brother works very hard—his Poem is nearly finished. I do not mean the Recluse, of course, but that part in connection with it of which you have seen some Books. We all join in kindest remembrances to Sir George and you. Believe me ever your affectionate Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

I will write if the letter has been charged. My Brother was not able to go on [with] the poem which I told you he had begun.
Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London.

MS. 218. *W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*
M. G. K.

Grasmere, June 3d, 1805.

My dear Sir George,

I write to you from the moss-hut at the top of my orchard, the sun just sinking behind the hills in front of the entrance,

and his light falling upon the green moss of the side opposite me. A Linnet is singing in the tree above, and the Children of some of our neighbours, who have been to-day little John's Visitors, are playing below, equally noisy and happy; the green fields in the level area of the vale, and part of the lake, lie before me in quietness. I have just been reading two newspapers, full of fractious brawls about Lord Melville and his delinquencies,¹ ravages of the French in the West Indies,² victories of the English in the East, Fleets of ours roaming the sea in search of enemies whom they cannot find, etc. etc. etc.; and I have asked myself more than once lately, if my affections can be in the right place, caring as I do so little about what the world seems to care so much for. All this seems to me, 'a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing'. It is pleasant in such a mood to turn one's thoughts to a good Man and a dear Friend. I have, therefore, taken up the pen to write to you. And, first, let me thank you (which I ought to have done long ago, and should have done, but that I knew I had a license from you to procrastinate) for your most acceptable present of Coleridge's portrait, welcome in itself, and more so as coming from you. It is as good a resemblance as I expect to see of Coleridge, taking it altogether, for I consider C's as a face absolutely impracticable. Mrs. Wordsworth was overjoy'd at the sight of the Print; Dorothy and I much pleased. We think it excellent about the eyes and forehead, which are the finest parts of C.'s face, and the general contour of the face is well given; but, to my Sister and me, it seems to fail sadly about the middle of the face, particularly at the bottom of the nose. Mrs. W. feels this also; and my Sister so much, that, except when she covers the whole of the middle of the face, it seems to her so

¹ Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, was attacked by Whitbread in the House of Commons for applying to other uses money voted for the Navy, and for conniving at the Treasurer of the Navy appropriating, for the time, money to his own personal use. On May 6 Melville's name was removed from the list of Privy Councillors; and in the following year he was impeached in the House of Lords, but acquitted.

² In January Admiral Missiessy had set sail for the W. Indies, and he was followed in March by Villeneuve. They did much damage to English settlements and levied contributions, and destroyed many English merchantmen. Nelson set off in pursuit, but was unable to come up with them.

entirely to alter the expression, as rather to confound than revive in her mind the remembrance of the original. We think, as far as mere likeness goes, Hazlitt's is better; but the expression in Hazlitt's is quite dolorous and funereal; that in this, is much more pleasing, though certainly falling far below what one would wish to see infused into a picture of C.

Mrs. C. received a day or two ago a Letter from a Friend who had letters from Malta, not from Coleridge, but a Miss Stoddart, who is there with her Brother. These letters are of the date of the fifth of March, and speak of him as looking well and being well, and talking of coming home, but doubtful whether by land or sea.

I have the pleasure to say that I finished my poem¹ about a fortnight ago. I had looked forward to the day as a most happy one; and I was indeed grateful to God for giving me life to complete the work, such as it is; but it was not a happy day for me; I was dejected on many accounts; when I looked back upon the performance it seemed to have a dead weight about it, the reality so far short of the expectation; it was the first long labour that I had finished, and the doubt whether I should ever live to write *The Recluse*, and the sense which I had of this poem being so far below what I seemed capable of executing, depressed me much; above all, many heavy thoughts of my poor departed Brother hung upon me, the joy which I should have had in showing him the Manuscript, and a thousand other vain fancies and dreams. I have spoken of this because it was a state of feeling new to me, the occasion being new. This work may be considered as a sort of *portico* to *The Recluse*, part of the same building, which I hope to be able, ere long, to begin with in earnest; and if I am permitted to bring it to a conclusion, and to write, further, a narrative Poem of the Epic kind, I shall consider the *task* of my life as over. I ought to add that I have the satisfaction of finding the present Poem not quite of so alarming a length as I apprehended.

I wish much to hear from you, if you have leisure; but as you are so indulgent to me, it would be the highest injustice were I otherwise to you.

¹ *The Prelude.*

JUNE 1805

We have read *Madoc*, and been highly pleased with it; it abounds in beautiful pictures and descriptions, happily introduced, and there is an animation diffused through the whole story; though it cannot, perhaps, be said that any of the characters interest you much, except, perhaps, young Llewellyn, whose situation is highly interesting, and he appears to me the best conceived and sustained character in the piece. His speech to his Uncle at their meeting in the Island is particularly interesting. The Poem fails in the highest gifts of the poet's mind, imagination in the true sense of the word, and knowledge of human nature and the human heart. There is nothing that shows the hand of the great Master; but the beauties in description are innumerable; for instance, that of the figure of the Bard, towards the beginning of the convention of the bards, receiving the poetic inspiration; that of the wife of Talala, the Savage going out to meet her husband; that of Madoc and the Aztecan king with a long name, preparing for battle; everywhere, indeed, you have beautiful descriptions, and it is a work which does the Author high credit, I think. I should like to know your opinion of it. Farewell! Best remembrances and love to Lady Beaumont. Believe me, my dear Sir George, your most sincere friend,

W. Wordsworth.

My Sister thanks Lady Beaumont for her letter, and will write in a few days. I find that Lady B has been pleased much by *Madoc*.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Grosvenor Square, London.

MS.
K(—)

219. *D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*

Saturday June 8th [1805].

William has finished his poem.

My dear Friend,

Owing to the miserable regulation of our Post, we have only received your letter this evening, therefore it is impossible unless something has happened to detain you, that it should reach you while you are at Clifton. We shall anxiously expect to hear

from you again. You say nothing of the manner of your journey nor the time when we may look out for you—but we conclude there must be time for another letter to reach us, as your day's journey *must* be short, and probably you will stop on the way. We shall be very full of care and thought about you, but yet I trust (as Dr. B does not positively forbid the journey) that it may be of service to you having the prospect of seeing us at the end of it,—and I verily believe that nothing would be of more service to you than spending the summer here provided we can keep you in quietness. Mr. Clarkson is going into Scotland, therefore you must be left alone a part of the time. Why then would not Robert Newton's house do for you? It is still vacant and we think that nowhere else can you be so comfortable, and any visitors that you might have when your husband is with you could lodge at the Inn which is very near. Your staying in our house, small as it is, we fear would be out of the question with two children. You would not be quiet enough. We have got the roof of the peat room raised but the walls are new plaistered and it will be the end of the Summer before it is fit to be slept in. We have Fletcher's house where our servant sleeps and perhaps yours might sleep with her, but then John is my bed fellow and you must be in the same room. At Ambleside you would be so far from us that we could not see each other in the way we should wish; if you were at Robert Newton's you might dine with us every day in fine weather and in all weathers we could see [you]. As to the cooking you will only need it in wet weather and surely your maid may be able to cook for you and herself at such times, and when Mr. C. is at Grasmere somebody perhaps might be hired. I had a letter from Miss Lamb in which she speaks of you and your visit to her with great feeling. We have been so much employed that I have neither written to her nor you since, you will be pleased that I have been prevented by such a cause. We had let every thing remain neglected, and in ruin. We had not dared to look at the garden, and a little shed which we had begun at the top of the orchard remained unfinished. We durst not look in the face of anything we loved that was not forced upon us. For three months I was only once on the top of the orchard. We have

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summoned up our hearts, and done everything; and now we spend many sweet hours in this shed, where now I write to you at half past six o'clock, Saturday evening. The sun yet a considerable height above the mountain tops shines in upon me. Oh! my friend, we remember our brother every moment of our lives, and begin even to feel in happiness how great a blessing the memory of him will ever be to us. It is too much sometimes, but God is merciful and we glory in the goodness of our dear brother, and so we comfort ourselves. We are all pretty well—I am grown fatter.

It has given us great pain to hear that in addition to your other sufferings you have had so much reason to be anxious about Tom. We rejoice that he is better. Children of that age are subject to bad looks especially if they grow very fast. The hut at the orchard top is of great use to us in keeping the other house quiet and so perhaps if it were not for the bedrooms you might be with us without being annoyed by bustle or noise. Our kitchen where we cook is at the other house. Do write in the greatest of haste—May God bless you for ever more—I trust we shall [seal] you but we shall have [seal] and pain till then. Ever yours D. W.

Address: Mrs. Clarkson, No. 2 Boyce's Buildings, Clifton, Bristol.

MS. 220. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere, June 11th, 1805.

Tuesday

My dear Friend

It will give you pleasure to hear that I have delayed writing to you in consequence of full employment. I do not mean employment that made it impossible or inconvenient; but I had determined within myself not to write till our work was ended. In the first place we turned to the melancholy garden, and put it into order; the orchard hut, which had remained unfinished since last autumn, we have completed; and our own dwelling-house, which had fallen into disorder like other things, we have had set to rights. While these labours were going on I took a small share in them, but nursing was my chief business. Since

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that time I have been engaged in finishing a copy of a journal of our Tour in Scotland—this was at the first beginning a very painful office—I had written it for the sake of Friends who could not [be] with us at the time, and my Brother John had been always in my thoughts, for we wished him to know everything that befel us. The task of re-copying this journal, which at first when it was proposed to me after his death, I thought I could never do, I performed at last, and found it a tranquillizing employment. I write to you from the Hut, where we pass all our time except when we are walking—it has been a rainy morning, but we are here sheltered and warm, and in truth I think it is the sweetest place on Earth—the little wrens often alight upon the thatch and sing their low song, but this morning *all* the Birds are rejoicing after the rain. Before my eyes is the Church, and a few houses among trees, and, still beyond, the hollow of Easedale which I imagine but cannot see, and the quiet mountains shutting all up. Where I sit I have no view of the Lake, but if I chuse to move half a yard further along the seat, I can see it; and so on, going all round, we have a different view. My Brother is at Patterdale, he took his fishing rod over the mountains, there being a pass from Grasmere thither. My Sister and I accompanied him to the top of it, and parted from him near a Tarn under a part of Helvellyn—he had gone up on Saturday with a neighbour of ours to fish there, but he quitted his companion and poured out his heart in some beautiful verses to the memory of our lost Brother, who used to go sometimes alone to that same Tarn, for the pleasure of angling in part, but still more for his love of solitude and of the mountains. Near that very Tarn William and I bade him farewell the last time he was at Grasmere, when he went from us to take the command of the ship. We were in view of the head of Ulswater, and stood till we could see him no longer, watching him as he *hurried* down the stony mountain. Oh! my dear Friend, you will not wonder that we love that place. I have been twice to it since his death. The first time was agony, but it is now a different feeling—poor William was overcome on Saturday—and with floods of tears wrote those verses—he parted from us yesterday (Monday) very chearfully, and indeed his spirits are far better than I could have

thought possible at this time—he will return to us we hope in three days—he went for the sake of relaxation having finished his long poem, and intending to pause a short time before he begins the other. You will judge that a happy change has been wrought in his mind when he chuses John's employments, and one of John's haunts (for he delighted in the neighbourhood of Patterdale) for such a purpose.

We have had no news of Coleridge's Return, further than a confirmation of his intention, but no time was spoken of, and the letter from Miss Stoddart, who sees him probably almost daily, was dated the 5th of March. We conclude now that he will be at Malta when the tidings of my Brother's death and the loss of the Abergavenny reach that place; and we have no doubt that he will come by the first ship afterwards. We expect Mrs. C. at the end of this week—she is to bring the little Darling Sara with her, who has by the mercy of God escaped from an accident that you will shudder to hear of. She slipped from the Servant who was playing with her near the Forge at the bottom of the field, ran upon a wooden bridge, which I believe has been built since you were at Keswick, and fell into the Greta—the Bridge is very high above the Stream, and the water was low—it is almost miraculous that she was not dashed to pieces. A man from the forge went a considerable way down the river and took her out. She was put to bed immediately and soon recovered, but she has never been *perfectly* well since; Mrs. C. hopes however that change of air will entirely restore her. What a shock for her poor Father if, after his sorrowful voyage, he had heard the tidings of *her* death too!

Perhaps this letter may not find you in London. I should wish it to be so except for Coleridge's sake, to whom it would be such a comfort to see you when he returns, but it is all uncertain when that will be, and we must try to be easy and patient. We are often, in spite of all we can do, very painfully anxious about him. I said I should wish this letter might not find you in London—you would guess my reason, it seems as if the spring-time were almost wasted for those who are obliged to be in a large city. We have had delicious weather, and I may truly say that we never more deeply enjoyed the blessing. As soon as

breakfast is over we come up hither, stay all day, and after our walk in the evening return, and often linger here till the stars appear. I do not expect that we shall see you this summer, and indeed I cannot even *wish* that you should come for so short a time merely to *see us*, but it will be different when Coleridge is at home also. William has returned our thanks to you and Sir George for the print of Coleridge, and I believe told you what we think of it. It seems to me to be in parts far better than any other likeness except that painted by Hazlitt, which is so dismal that I shrink from the sight of it. I thought of Coleridge dying, and not merely dying, but dying of sorrow and raised up upon his bed to take a last farewell of his Friends. My Sister's pleasure at the first sight of the print was equal to what the painter himself, I think, could have desired, but the whole face, when seen all at once, seems to *me* scarcely to resemble Coleridge, though the forehead and outline of the *shape* of the face are very much like him. We have read *Madoc* with great delight but I will tell you more of my own particular sentiments of it when I have read it again to myself. I had one painful feeling throughout, that I did not care as much about *Madoc* as the Author wished me to do, and that the characters in general are not sufficiently distinct to make them have a separate after-existence in my affections. We were all exceedingly interested for young Llewellyn, but the women, except Erillyab, do not seem to me to differ much from women as represented in our better modern novels, and I could not discover that the characters of Emma and Goervyl were discriminated from each other. Yet the manner of telling the story is exceedingly spirited, and the attention is always kept awake. As you observe the descriptions are often exceedingly beautiful—they are like resting-places both for repose and delight. The language occasionally, nay *frequently*, gave me pain, and mostly in cases where it seemed that a very little trouble might have removed the faults. I have not the Book here or I would take down a few of those expressions which I complain of. They are a sort of barbarisms which appear to belong to Southey himself. But indeed I seem to be talking very conceitedly, and almost as if I thought I were a great Critic—so I must end with saying again

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that we have read the Poem with the greatest delight, and I expect much more from reading it alone, for there is a weakness in my mind which makes it exceedingly difficult for me to remember or even *understand* a story when it is read aloud. I do not think I lost much of the spirit of it in this first reading, I mean of the *manner* etc., but many of the incidents escaped from me.

I have written a long letter all about ourselves. I should have taken a larger sheet, if I had not thought I should have given over much sooner, for I am sorry to make a double letter of it. I have not mentioned your dear Sister's name, but she has been often in my thoughts. May God restore her to you for years of happiness! I wish very much to know the degree of confinement in which she is detained, and whether she suffers much personal inconvenience from it. I hope I shall hear from you soon, but if I knew you were still in London I should not be uneasy at your silence, therefore do not let the thought of my expecting a letter from you press on you in the throng of your many engagements. If Sir George should be ill or any evil should happen, I am sure that by some means you will take care that we shall know it.

Farewell, believe me ever, with sincere love and esteem, your faithful Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

My Sister sends her kind remembrances. My Brother has written some small poems which I think you will like, since he finished that long one on his own early life and education.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Grosvenor Square, London; *redirected to:* Dunmow—Essex; *and again to:* Cole Orton Hall—Ashby de la Zouche.

MS. 221. *D. W. to Lady Beaumont*¹

Grasmere, Sunday evening, 16th June [1805].

My dear Friend,

I congratulate you with a true feeling of the blessing on your return to the quiet of a country life. This evening, while my

¹ This letter fills the first half of a quarto sheet—the other half, which presumably contained 'Glen Almain', has disappeared, but the fragment was received and endorsed by Lady Beaumont with the date June 16th 1805.

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Brother and I were taking a long walk together, how ardently did I wish that you had been coming to spend a part of the summer in our neighbourhood! While my Brother was composing his verses by my side I thought to myself to how many beautiful places we might lead you, places dear both for the sake of the living and the dead—and when he had done we talked about you; and bitterly did I regret that my Sister and I had been so unfortunate as never to see you while you were at Keswick—to be so near and yet to miss you! We arrived at the house scarcely more than two hours after you had left it; the rooms which you inhabited were just as when you had gone out of them—they looked to me at that time deserted and dismal, but now that I know you so well they are far more so in my memory.

I write chiefly that I may have the pleasure of sending you one of the poems which my Brother has written lately. I have caused you so much sorrow lately that I am glad to send off a letter which contains something which I am sure will give you pleasure; nay *delight*, for I have myself been so much delighted with the poem that I feel confident that you, who have been so ready to sympathize with me, will be so too. We passed through the Narrow Glen (Glen Almain I believe as it is properly called) when we were in Scotland. My recollections of the time and place no doubt add greatly to my pleasure in the poem, but I think the lines are very beautiful.

My Brother returned from Patterdale on Friday night. A Mr Sharpe, who visits this country every year, joined him there—he is on his way into Scotland and will spend a few days here on his return. I believe he is not upon intimate terms with you, but he sometimes happens to be in company with you, and William tells me that he saw you not very long ago. Do you recollect the name of the Gentleman whom you met at Lord Lowther's, who knew my Brother as well? The Lines on Switzerland were published in quarto by Johnson, and at the same time 'The Evening Walk' a poem descriptive of an evening Walk among the mountains and lakes of this neighbourhood—I think we can procure you copies of these poems—Peter Crosthwaite had a few in his possession which I believe he has

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never sold. Mr Johnson when he has been applied to for them has said that he had none left, but William is sure that they have not been all sold, and that a heap of them must be in some corner of Johnson's warehouse. The *Salisbury Plain* we have in manuscript—it contains many very fine passages. When we have the happiness of seeing

C.K(—) 222. *W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*

[June–July,¹ 1805.]

. . . We anxiously expected a letter yesterday from Lady Beaumont, hoping to hear that you continue to advance towards recovery; but no letter coming, we have many fears, and I can no longer defer writing, which, however, I would not do if I thought you would consider yourself as obliged to write again. For Heaven's sake, my dear friend, let us both be quite easy on this head. I assure you I do not measure the interest you take in me or mine either by the length or frequency of your letters; if I but hear from time to time how you are going on in health, or upon any occasion when my sympathies can give you comfort or pleasure, this is all I look for. Lady Beaumont is so good as to write often to my sister, so that through her we may learn these things; and, therefore, never think of writing to me. Should such an impulse of genial spirits as one sometimes feels at the thought of taking a walk, making a sketch, or playing a tune ever prompt you to take up the pen, let me hear from you, but not otherwise; never trouble your head about it a moment.

I am glad my verses gave you pleasure; I have been hunting over and over in my mind through all that I have written for something to send you, and cannot pitch upon anything. I have composed lately two small poems in memory of my brother, but they are too melancholy, else I would willingly copy them. My sister, however, shall transcribe something or other, though I have not a single line in my possession which quite satisfies me for such a purpose. . . .

¹ Clearly before July 14, as the next letter proves.

[*Then follows a quotation from 'The Prelude', Book VIII,—from line 1, 'What sounds are these, Helvellyn, that are heard' to 'their calm abode', line 61 (1805 text).]*

The above is from the beginning of one of the books upon my own earlier life. It has been extracted not so much from any notion of its merit, as from its standing more independent of the rest of the poem than perhaps any other part of it. The few lines which you will find on the next page require a long preface, which my sister begs you will excuse. It is from her Journal of our tour in Scotland. We had visited the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, and were so much pleased as to return thither towards the end of our tour. We had been entertained at a ferryman's house, a Highland hut on the banks of the lake, and were again making our way thither on foot, a journey of about six miles, along the bank of the lake. My sister then proceeds thus: 'The path, or road (for it was neither one nor the other, but something between both), was the pleasantest I have ever travelled in my life for the same length of way; now with marks of sledges or wheels, or none at all, bare or green, as it might happen; now a little descent, now a level, sometimes a shady lane, at others an open track through green fields; then again it would lead us into thick coppice woods, which often entirely excluded the lake, and again admitted it by glimpses. We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening: Ben Lomond, and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond, which we had seen from the Garrison, were very majestic under the clear sky; the lake was perfectly still, the air sweet and mild. I felt how much more interesting it is to visit a place where we have been before, than it can possibly be the first time, except under peculiar circumstances. The sun had been set some time, when being within a quarter of a mile of the ferryman's hut, and close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly-dressed women without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening's walk. One of them said to us in a friendly, soft tone of voice, 'What, you are stepping westward?' I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front *yet* glowing with the departed sun.

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William wrote the following poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine.' . . .

[Here follows 'Stepping Westward' (Oxf. W., p. 289). This poem, written on June 3, 1805, was among the last that W. had written.]

MS. 223. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere, 14th July, 1805.

My dear Friend,

At last, we have had a letter from Coleridge! It brings no worse tidings than we should have expected, though distressing indeed it has been to us—but you shall have his own words—it is dated May 1st: 'Should this letter arrive alone, do not be uneasy. I have indeed been so ill, the effect of a variety of causes, as to be unable to write by this convoy; the multitude and importance of the public letters, joined with events that I dare not at present speak of—but which have wrenched my very heart. O dear Friends! Death has come among us!—I have but a few minutes, as the convoy is off a day before the time given out. I mean to return in the latter end of May at all events, and have wept like a child that the convoy is off without me, but my office of public Secretary makes it impossible—but I am resolved, let it cost what it may, that in May go I will. Till within the last month my health was delightfully improved, with the exception of one nervous fever in Sicily.

'I have only time to say that I hope all will yet be well—that an Imperial Vessel of War sails three days hence, and will overtake the Convoy—that I shall employ the whole of the intermediate time in writing to you.'

This is almost the whole of the Letter: he adds at the bottom: 'my Ideas respecting your Recluse were burnt as a Plague-garment, and all my long letters to you and Sir George Beaumont sunk to the bottom of the Sea!' It is not worse than we knew it would be, for his tender heart would be ready to burst when he heard the tidings, and you know that his bodily frame sympathizes in an extraordinary degree with the state of his mind.

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We have reason to hope, that as perhaps his most important business was ended when the convoy left Malta, and the first *shock* which the shipwreck and death of my Brother had given him was passed, he might be in better health at his departure, and the voyage may be of service to him, though the thoughts of our poor Sailor and his ship will be with him continually. He knows how John was used to walk upon the Vessel's Deck, and think of us and our quiet vales, and the mountains among which he spent his youth—but Oh my dear Lady Beaumont this leads me to thoughts which are almost like rebellion against the will of heaven. I know and feel and trust that he was taken from the happiness of this world for wise ends—then why do these bitter tears flow for him?

We must endeavour to wait with patience and hope for Coleridge's return—perhaps he may be here very soon, yet we *may* have many weeks of anxiety, for he might have great obstacles to struggle with even at the last before he could release himself from his office. What a pleasure would it be to us all to see him employed in labours more likely to endure and better fitted to his nature! but first we must see him in health of body and tranquillity of mind.

It was a week on Friday since [I] received your letter which I wished to answer immediately but was prevented. I am sure I cannot give you an idea of the pleasure which it gave us after Sir George's melancholy account of the state of his health. Every post we had been disheartened more and more that there was no letter from you, for I was sure you would write as soon as Sir George was much better, and I could not help fearing that as you did not write he must be worse. My Brother sent a letter to Sir George the very day we received yours. Mrs Coleridge and Sara left us a week ago after having been here a fortnight. Sara is very much altered since she was a Baby—all her meekness is gone, and she is become a Snarler—a little vixen. Poor Child! it is no wonder she should be indulged at this time, and I hope when her Father returns that she will alter. I could not help grieving to see her so different from his darling Hartley. She is puny in appearance, very diminutive, and has not a healthy appetite. I think it is likely she will be

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a clever Child, and though I must own that she is far less interesting than she was a year ago, yet she grows exceedingly like her Father.

We all join in kindest remembrances, and earnest wishes for good news of Sir George's health. I expect every moment to be called upon for my letters.

Farewell—believe me ever your affectionate

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Excuse blunders—at one part of my letter I scarcely knew what I wrote, and now I conclude in haste—Adieu.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Cole Orton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS. 224. *W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*
G. K.

Grasmere, July 29th, [1805.]

My dear Sir George,

We have all here been made happy in hearing that you are so much better. I write now chiefly on account of a mistake which you seem to be under concerning Coleridge. I guess from your Letter that you suppose him to be appointed to the place of Secretary to Sir A. Ball. This is by no means the case; he is merely an occasional substitute for Mr. Chapman, who is Secretary, and no doubt must have resumed his office long before this, as he had been expected every day some time before the date of C.'s last letter. The Paragraph in the Paper (which we also saw) positively states that C. is appointed¹ secretary; this is an error, and has been merely put in upon common rumour.

When you were ill I had a thought which I will mention to you. It was this: I wished to know how you were at present situated as to house-room at Coleorton, that is, whether you could have found a corner for me to put my head in, in case I could have contrived to have commanded three weeks' time, or so. I am at present, and shall be for some time, engaged with a sick Friend,¹ who has come all the way from Bristol on purpose

¹ i.e. Mrs. Clarkson.

to see us, and has taken lodgings in the Village; but should you be unwell again, and my company be like to tend in the least to exhilarate you, I should like to know, that were it in my power to go and see you, I might have the liberty to do so.

Having such reason to expect Coleridge at present (were we at liberty in other respects), I cannot think of taking my Family a tour, agreeable to your kind suggestion. Something has, however, already been added by your means to our comforts, in the way of Books, and probably we shall be able to make an excursion ere the summer be over.

By the bye, are you possessed of Houbraken and Vertue's *Heads of Illustrious Persons*, with anecdotes of their lives by Birch? I had an opportunity of purchasing a handsome copy (far below the price at which [it] now sells, I believe, in London) at Penrith, a few weeks ago; and if you have not a copy, and think the work has any merit, you would please me greatly by giving it a place in your Library.

I am glad you like the passage in *Madoc* about Llewellyn. Southey's mind does not seem strong enough to draw the picture of a Hero. The character of Madoc is often very insipid and contemptible; for instance, when he is told that the Hoamen have surprized Caermadoc, and of course (he has reason to believe) butchered or carried away all the women and children, what does the author make him do? Think of Goervyl and Llayan very tenderly forsooth; but not a word about his people! In short, according to my notion, the character is throughout languidly conceived, and, as you observe, the contrast between her and Llewellyn makes him look very mean. I made a mistake when I pointed out a beautiful passage as being in the beginning of the meeting of the bards; it occurs before, and ends thus:

His eyes were closed;
His head, as if in reverence to receive
The inspiration, bent; and as he raised
His glowing Countenance and brighter eye
And swept with passionate hands the ringing harp.

The verses of your ancestor, Francis Beaumont the younger, are very elegant and harmonious, and written with true feeling. Is this the only poem of his extant? There are some pleasing

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verses (I think by Corbet,¹ Bishop of Norwich) on the death of Francis Beaumont the elder; they end, I remember, thus, alluding to his short life:

by whose sole death appears,
Wit 's a disease consumes men in few years.

I have never seen the works of the Brother of the dramatic Poet; but I know he wrote a poem upon the battle of Bosworth field. Probably it will be in the volume which you have found, which it would give me great pleasure to see, as also Charnwood Rocks, which must have a striking effect in that Country. I am highly flattered by Lady Beaumont's favorable opinion of me and my Poems. My Sister will answer her affectionate letter very soon; she would have done it before now, but she has been from home three days, and unwell, or entirely engrossed with some visitors whom we have had, the rest of her time.

The Letter which you will find accompanying this is from an acquaintance of ours to his wife, he lives at Patterdale, and she was over at Grasmere.² We thought it would interest you. Farewell. I remain in hopes of good news of your health, your affectionate and sincere Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart, Coleorton, near Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS. 225. W. W. and D. W. to Lady Beaumont

(W. writes)

Grasmere, August 7th, 1805.

The following was written in remembrance of a beautiful letter of my Brother John, sent to us from Portsmouth, when he had left us at Grasmere, and first taken the command of his un-

¹ Richard Corbet (1582-1635): his poems were collected in 1647, but W. probably knew these lines from their figuring in several editions of Beaumont and Fletcher, among the 'commendatory poems'. The poems of Sir John Fletcher are to be found in Anderson's *Corpus* of the British Poets (1795), which was 'for many years the only edition of the older English poets within W.'s reach'. (T. Hutchinson.)

² The letter is from Luff, and gives an account of the finding of the bones of Charles Gough by Red Tarn, under Helvellyn. *v. W.'s Fidelity* (Oxf. W., p. 491).

fortunate ship, more than four years ago. Some of the expressions in the Poem are the very words he used in his letter.

N.B. I have written two Poems to the same Flower before—this is partly alluded to in the first stanza.

W. Wordsworth.

To the Daisy

Sweet Flower! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
I welcome thee once more ;
But He, who was, on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

Ah! hopeful, hopeful was the day
When to that Ship he went his way,
To govern and to guide:
His wish was gained ; a little time
Would bring him back in manhood's prime,
And free for life, these hills to climb
With all his wants supplied.

And hopeful, hopeful was the day
When that stout Ship at anchor lay.
Beside the shores of Wight:
The May had then made all things green ;
And goodly, also, to be seen
Was that proud Ship, of Ships the Queen,
His hope and his delight.

Yet then, when called ashore (I know
The truth of this, he told me so)
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, sweet Daisy Flowers!
He oft would steal at leisure hours ;
And loved you glittering in the bowers,
A starry multitude—

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But hark the Word! the Ship is gone;
Returns from her long course: anon
Sets sail: in season due
Once more on English earth they stand:
But, when a third time from the land
They parted, sorrow was at hand
For him and for his crew.

Six weeks beneath the moving Sea
He lay in slumber quietly,
Unforc'd by wind or wave
To quit the Ship for which he died,
(All claims of duty satisfied)
And then they found him at her side,
And bore him to the grave.

Vain service! yet not vainly done
For this, if other end were none,
That he, who had been cast
Upon a way of life unmeet
For such a gentle Soul and sweet,
Should find an undisturbed retreat
Near what he loved, at last:

That neighbourhood of Wood and Field
To him a resting-place should yield,
A meek man and a brave!
The Birds shall sing and Ocean make
A mournful murmur for *his* sake:
And thou sweet Flower! shalt sleep and wake
Upon his senseless Grave.

(D. writes)

August 7th.

My dear Friend,

I was very poorly at the time I received the first of your affectionate letters, and in the intervals when I was a little better, my time was taken up by visitors;¹ yet I should have

¹ Walter and Mrs. Scott stayed at Dove Cottage in August, and among others Humphry Davy and Richard Sharp.

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written immediately if I had not thought that my extract from Coleridge's letter would set you at ease respecting his residence in Malta. The newspaper paragraph which alarmed you so much had made *us* smile, little thinking of the effect it might produce upon others who, like ourselves, were anxious about him. Seeing it in the *Courier*, we attributed it entirely to the *friendship* of Stuart, and said to one another 'he knows well enough that Coleridge is coming home and wants to have the pleasure of announcing his arrival—the *Secretary to Sir Alexander Ball with all his etceteras!!* You must know that this is one way that Stuart adopts of obliging his Friends—Upon my Brother's marriage he inserted in the Morning Post the most ridiculous paragraph that ever was penned: but perhaps in this case of Coleridge it may have arisen from common rumour.

We have been very busily engaged since I last wrote to you partly in consequence of returns of my head-aches and sicknesses, and still more by a succession of visitors. We give ourselves as little trouble, and keep ourselves as easy as we can, but in our small house, when we have only one or two persons besides our own family we have little quiet or leisure. At present a dear and good Friend is in lodgings near us, and we are very much with her. She has been nursing herself for two years at Bristol and elsewhere, and is come purposely to spend a few weeks at Grasmere for the satisfaction of seeing us. She is still very ill, and we fear that she must be always an Invalid, though perhaps with unremitting care she may be kept alive for many years¹—her original disease was on the liver; but she has many others and has endured most agonising pains month after month, I may say, year after year; yet she is in general chearful and often lively and even merry and the cause of mirth by our fireside. She is the Wife of Mr Clarkson who was the grand mover of the main efforts for the abolition of the Slave Trade. They had a house² and a small estate at the foot of Ulswater, which they have sold in consequence of Mrs C.'s ill health. Lord Lowther was the purchaser, and it was said that his family intended going thither occasionally in the Summer; but I do not hear that they have yet been. It is a most enchanting place in fine

¹ She died Jan. 31, 1856.

² Eusemere.

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weather, indeed in all seasons the prospect from the house is one of the finest among the Lakes, but the situation is far too much exposed even for the comfort of healthy persons in winter. Talking of Lord Lowther reminds me of Mr Satterthwaite, whose Father now lives at Cockermouth in the house where my Brothers and I were born, and where my Father died one and twenty years ago. It is at the outskirts of the Town, the garden bordering on the River Derwent, or rather a *Terrace* which overlooks the River, a spot which I remember as vividly as if I had been there but the other day, though I have never seen it in its neatness, as my Father and Mother used to keep it, since I was just six years old, a few months before my Mother's death. I visited the place again at the age of twenty three and all was in ruin, the terrace-walk buried and choked up with the old privot hedge which had formerly been most beautiful, roses and privot intermingled—the same hedge where the sparrows were used to build their nests. Nobody lived in the house for many years after my Father's death—at length Lord Lonsdale (perhaps in a whim) had it repaired and put a Tenant in it; and now Satterthwaite's Father is there. The Son¹ is, I believe, a very worthy man and I wish you may see him again; he was intimate with my youngest Brother at College; William does not know very much of him, but when he was with him some years ago he thought highly of him.

My dear Friend, what pleasure would it give us to see you! Knowing that we are not likely to meet at Grasmere this summer, and even not wishing it (for we could not endure to think that you should put off going to Buxton, a journey of so much importance, for the sake of coming hither) I have thought and thought again of all possibilities, and even when William used to talk of going to Coleorton at the time Sir George was ill, I was unreasonable enough to suggest that I might accompany him, and turned often to the idea in spite of many obstacles. (At that time Mrs Clarkson was not come, and we were uncertain whether she would be able to undertake the journey.)

¹ Satterthwaite will be found frequently mentioned in the extracts from Chris. W.'s journals given in his grandson's *University Life in the 18th Century*, pp. 587–92.

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I mention these wanderings of my desires because you inquire after our plans for the summer, and indeed I have had none other of leaving home, though my Brother would gladly talk with me about making a short tour at the latter end of the Autumn, but my Sister cannot go with us unless she has weaned the Baby, and I do not like to go upon a second tour without her. I have never had a desire to meet you in London because I seem to be constitutionally framed to be uncomfortable when I am there. In the first place my health always suffers, and I am distracted by noise, and the multitude of objects so different from those among which our lives are spent: but when I hear of the little valley of Grace dieu, the rocks and the woods, I feel as if I should be at home and at ease and happy at once.

My Brother has not resumed his great work since the finishing of the poem on his own life, and he now begins to be anxious to get forward again; but till we are alone, I do not think that he will do much. On the first page you will find a poem to the memory of our departed Brother which William has transcribed. I had long wished to send it you but had not courage to set about the task myself. I know not when the day will come that I shall find solace in murmuring to myself these lamentations for his loss, but I trust it *will* come; for William is comforted in that manner, and I already at times love to hear him repeat these verses, and others which John particularly delighted in.

We have just read a poem called *The Sabbath* written by a very good man in a truly Christian spirit; it contains several sweet passages—beautiful images and tender thoughts—but it wants harmony, the versification indeed being very displeasing. I say it is written by a *good man*; but I know nothing of him except from his poem; but a good man I am sure he is. I wish there had been more of strength and power, a certain breath and spirit, and elegance, a something which is wanting diffused through the whole, and binding the whole together. I had intended making an extract, but I have not time and perhaps you may have seen the poem.

Your Goddaughter is the delight of her Father's heart: he often says to us seriously: 'I do think that she is the most engaging child that ever was born,' and then again he will say:

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'If ever there was a Beauty that little Darling is one.'—Indeed you may believe me this is not *all* parental blindness. Everybody sees something remarkable in her, a countenance for ever changing, and looks and actions denoting uncommon sensibility. As to her beauty, she is pretty enough; but perhaps we may deceive ourselves a little, for if a child be not much the contrary, if it be a fine child, it must at times appear beautiful to those who live with it. She has certainly, however, very fine blue eyes, and looks sweetly when she is in perfect health. We often talk about planting the little Maiden's Grove, though not with the same cheerfulness as when we first formed the scheme. One of our Guides to a final settling-place is in the Grave—and where is poor Coleridge?

Farewell, my dear Friend, my Brother and Sister unite in kindest remembrances.

Believe me ever your affectionate Friend

D. Wordsworth.

We have had a great deal of wet weather, and last Sunday night the waters of our vale were higher than they have ever been in the memory of any now living in Grasmere.—Great damage has been done to the hay and corn.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Coleorton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS.

226. D. W. to Richard W.

Park House, Sunday morning [early Aug. ? 1805]

My dear Brother,

I hope you will not think me very bold and very unreasonable when I ask you to fit me out the pony with a side-saddle and bridle. You know it will not be complete till it has got one. Do not mind it being a handsome or very smart one, for if it be neat and comfortable it will do very well for us, and, I assure you we shall be the prouder of it (as we are of the horse) for its having come from you. Mrs Threlkeld, Elizabeth, and I arrived at Park house on Friday Evening. They set off for Newbiggin today after dinner, and William meets me with a pony. I hope you

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will contrive to come hither before you leave the country. How glad I should be if you were to chance to come in before I go away!

William forgot to ask you about the Tax upon our property which we suppose is paid by you in London, for we pay nothing here on that score. When you send us the statement of the affairs (I mean the account of our property and what we have drawn for) be so good as to mention this.

I have been very well since the afternoon of the day you left us. I think the journey has been of service to me.—I heartily wish we may see you again this summer, and that I may be in better health to enjoy your company when you come. God bless you!

Believe me ever your affect^e Sister

D. Wordsworth.

When you leave the country you will send the pony to Park house, and we shall soon get it, and if you treat me with a side saddle, desire the Maker to send it to Mr. Hutchinson's.—Again I must say that I wish you not to get it an expensive one.

Address: Mr Richard Wordsworth (probably by hand).

MS. 227. W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.

(W. writes)

Sunday Eve August 25th [1805]

Dear Rich^d,

I forgot when I spoke to you about the 100£ to be paid to Mr Sotheby that the Note bears interest so that 18 or 19 months will be owing upon it, which you will have the goodness to pay.

We were greatly surprized to hear that you were still detained in the Country and quite sorry we are destined to see so little of you. We are all well: and all send best remembrances. Farewell, your affectionate Br

Wm Wordsworth.

(D. writes)

My dear Brother,

I must add a word to this concise epistle. We are very sorry that we are not to see you again. I wish you had not had so much business, however *profitable* it may have been to you.

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I wrote to Mrs Crackenthorpe for my Father's Bible, which I have long wished to be possessed of. At any future time should you desire it, it may be sent to you. Thank you for the side saddle which Sara Hutchinson (who arrived at Grasmere today,) says you have ordered for me.

Mary sends her kind love. We are all well. John is as fine a fellow as ever you saw—greatly improved since he had his sore chin.

Your affect^e Sister,
D. Wordsworth.

No address.

MS. 228. D. W. to Lady Beaumont
K.

Grasmere, 26th August [1805].

My dear Friend,

I have been prevented from answering your last letter by several accidental interruptions, otherwise I should not have been so long in expressing our sense of the kindness of your proposal. Whatever may come of it, it is a pleasure to us to think and talk of the scheme, and your delicate and most friendly care for our comfort and happiness in this instance, as in so many others, has made impressions upon us that cannot pass away and will for ever be a source of delight. That you may have an accurate notion of our house my Brother insists that I send you a measurement of the sitting-room, and I intend to give you a plan or drawing of the whole at the end of my letter. We do indeed seriously think of visiting you next summer, and we have said so much about it in *Johnny's* hearing that he already talks in his lisping way of 'dawing to see Lady Beaumont'—it is a long time beforehand, and far to look forward, but if all goes on well with you and us, I do not see it may not happen, and at all events it is pleasant to think of it. The end of the month of June is the time we have fixed upon for setting forward, the spring and early part of the summer being the season of our quiet enjoyment of home, and the end of summer and the autumn the season of bustle; for we are directly in the highway of the tourists. Of course, I mean that time *should it*

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suit you; and also, it being uncertain whether we shall remain another year in this country, we perhaps may be ourselves obliged to defer the journey till the end of summer, as my Brother and I are determined that Mrs. Wordsworth shall see a part of Scotland before we finally quit the north of England.

As to the two houses the picture you have sketched of the cottage is delightful, and made me long to sit with you under the shade of its old Elm Tree; yet do not think that if the other house can be prepared for us with less trouble we should not therefore be more contented with it, though we might love the cottage better; and let me add too that we trust you will not put yourselves to any expense or trouble that may not turn to account hereafter. You know it is but waiting another year; that is, to be sure, a long time in human life at our age, but we may meet in some other way. I shall say no more upon this subject, depending upon your perfect openness with us.

Mr. Davy is probably with you at this time—he will have told you that he spent two or three pleasant days with my Brother and Walter Scott. William went to Keswick to meet Mr. Scott, and after having stayed a couple of days to our great surprize Mr. Davy also came home with him over Helvellyn. We all went upon Windermere the next day, and parted from Mr. Davy at Bowness, it being then his intention to see you at Coleorton in about a week. I had been very much pleased to see him thus unexpectedly, both on his own account and as a Friend of yours, and I was really quite delighted when I heard that he intended to be with you so soon. My Brother and Sister join me in kindest remembrance., [Believe me], your affectionate friend,

D. Wordsworth.

Now for my drawings. They will make you smile at my little skill.



This is the front of the house.

The door is at one end, and there is at the other end an out-jutting, which I really have not the power to delineate. We

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enter at the kitchen door. On the same floor is a Parlour which we have converted into a bedroom, and my Brother and Sister sleep there. Above stairs over the kitchen is the sitting-room—5 yards by 4, and 2 yards and a half in height—and over the other Room is a lodging room, where our visitors lodge. *My* room is in the outjutting, of which I have spoken, and there in the same part is also the pantry, lumber room, etc. So you see that, small as our house is, we have one spare apartment, and three rooms are all that will be necessary for us in your cottage, except a place for the servant to sleep in. Dorothy will be weaned at that time, and she will sleep with me, and John will sleep with the servant. All the rooms of this house are low, and each room has only one window. I have written in great haste. Excuse blunders—you may lament with me that I have not been taught to exercise the pencil. It is indeed true that I scarcely ever take a walk without lamenting it.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Coleorton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS. 229. *W. W. to Sir George Beaumont*
G. C. K.

Grasmere, October 17th, 1805.

My dear Sir George,

I was very glad to learn that you had room for me at Coleorton and far more so that your health was so much mended. Lady Beaumont's last letter to my Sister has made us wish that you were fairly through your present engagements with workmen and Builders, and as to improvements, had smoothed over the first difficulties, and gotten things into a way of improving themselves. I do not suppose that any man ever built a house without finding in the progress of it obstacles that were unforeseen, and something that might have been better planned; things teasing and vexatious when they come, however the mind may have been made up at the outset to a general expectation of the kind.

With respect to the grounds, you have there the advantage of being in good hands, namely, those of Nature; and, assuredly,

whatever petty crosses from contrariety of opinion or any other cause you may now meet with, these will soon disappear, and leave nothing behind but satisfaction and harmony. Setting out from the distinction made by Coleridge which you mentioned, that your House will belong to the Country, and not the Country be an appendage to your House, you cannot be wrong. Indeed, in the present state of society, I see nothing interesting either to the imagination or the heart, and, of course, nothing which true taste can approve, in any interference with nature grounded upon any other principle. In times when the feudal system was in its vigor, and the personal importance of every Chieftain might be said to depend entirely upon the extent of his landed property and rights of Seignory; when the King in the habits of people's minds was considered as the primary and true proprietor of the soil, which was granted out by him to different lords, and again by them to their several tenants under them, for the joint defence of all, there might have been something imposing to the imagination in the whole face of a district, testifying, obtrusively even, its dependence upon its Chief. Such an image would have been in the spirit of the society, implying power, grandeur, military state and security; and less directly in the person of the Chief, high birth and knightly education and accomplishments; in short, the most of what was then deemed interesting or affecting. Yet, with the exception of large parks and forests, nothing of this kind was known at that time, and these were left in their wild state, so that such display of ownership, so far from taking from the beauty of Nature, was itself a chief cause of that beauty being left unspoiled and unimpaired. The *improvements*, when the place was sufficiently tranquil to admit of any, though absurd and monstrous in themselves, were confined (as our present Laureate has observed, I remember, in one of his Essays) to an acre or two about the house in the shape of garden with terraces, etc. So that Nature had greatly the advantage in those days, when what has been called English gardening was unheard of. This is now beginning to be perceived, and we are setting out to travel backwards. Painters and Poets have had the credit of being reckoned the Fathers of English gardening; they will also have, hereafter, the

better praise of being fathers of a better taste. Error is in general nothing more than getting hold of good things, as everything has two handles, by the wrong one. It was a misconception of the meaning and principles of poets and painters which gave countenance to the modern system of gardening, which is now, I hope, on the decline; in other words, we are submitting to the rule which you at present are guided by, that of having our houses belong to the country, which will of course lead us back to the simplicity of Nature. And leaving your own individual sentiments and present work out of the question, what good can come of any other guide, under any circumstances? We have, indeed, distinctions of Rank, hereditary Legislators, and large landed Proprietors; but from numberless causes the state of society is so much altered, that nothing of that lofty or imposing interest formerly attached to large property in land, can now exist; none of the poetic pride, and pomp, and circumstance; nor anything that can be considered as making amends for violation done to the holiness of Nature. Let us take an extreme case, such as a Residence of a Duke of Norfolk or Northumberland; of course you would expect a Mansion, in some degree answerable to their consequence, with all conveniences. The names of Howard and Percy will always stand high in the regards of Englishmen; but it is degrading, not only to such families as these but to every really interesting one, to suppose that their importance will be most felt where most displayed, particularly in the way I am now alluding to; this is contracting a general feeling into a local one. Besides, were it not so, as to what concerns the past, a man would be sadly astray who should go, for example, to modernise Alnwick and its dependencies, with his head full of the antient Percies: he would find nothing there which would remind him of them, except by contrast; and of that kind of admonition he would, indeed, have enough. But this by the bye, for it is against the principle itself I am contending, and not the misapplication of it. After what was said above I may ask if anything connected with the families of Howard and Percy, and their rank and influence, and thus with the state of government and society, could, in the present age, be deemed a recompense for their thrusting

themselves in between us and Nature. Surely it is a substitution of little things for great when we would put a whole country into a nobleman's Livery. I know nothing which to me would be so pleasing or affecting, as to be able to say, when I am in the midst of a large estate, this man is not the victim of his condition; he is not the spoiled child of worldly grandeur; the thought of himself does not take the lead in his enjoyments; he is, where he ought to be, lowly-minded, and has human feelings; he has a true relish of simplicity, and therefore stands the best chance of being happy; at least, without it there is no happiness, because there can be no true sense of the bounty and beauty of the creation, or insight into the constitution of the human mind. Let a man of wealth and influence shew by the appearance of the country in his neighbourhood that he treads in the steps of the good sense of the age, and occasionally goes foremost; let him give countenance to improvements in agriculture, steering clear of the pedantry of it, and showing that its grossest utilities will connect themselves harmoniously with the more intellectual arts, and even thrive the best under such connection; let him do his utmost to be surrounded with tenants living comfortably, which will always bring with it the best of all graces which a country can have—flourishing fields and happy-looking houses; and, in that part of his estate devoted to park and pleasure-ground, let him keep himself as much out of sight as possible; let Nature be all in all, taking care that everything done by man shall be in the way of being adopted by her. If people chuse that a great mansion should be the chief figure in a Country, let this kind of keeping prevail through the picture, and true taste will find no fault.

I am writing now rather for writing's sake than anything else, for I have many remembrances beating about in my head which you would little suspect. I have been thinking of you, and Coleridge, and our Scotch tour, and Lord Lowther's grounds, and Heaven knows what. I have had before me the tremendously long ell-wide gravel walks of the Duke of Athol, among the wild glens of Blair, Bruar Water, and Dunkeld, brushed neatly, without a blade of grass or weed upon them, or anything that bore trace of a human footstep; much indeed of human hands,

but wear or tear of foot was none. Thence I passed to our neighbour, Lord Lowther; you know that his predecessor, greatly, without doubt, to the advantage of the Place, left it to take care of itself. The present Lord seems disposed to do something, but not much. He has a neighbour, a Quaker, an amiable, inoffensive man,¹ and a little of a Poet too, who has amused himself, upon his own small estate upon the Emont, in twining pathways along the banks of the river, making little Cells and bowers with inscriptions of his own writing, all very pretty as not spreading far. This man is at present Arbitrator Elegantiarum, or master of the grounds, at Lowther; and what he has done hitherto is very well, as it is little more than making accessible what could not before be got at. You know something of Lowther; I believe a more delightful spot is not under the sun. Last summer I had a charming walk along the river, for which I was indebted to this man, whose intention is to carry the Walk along the River-side till it joins the great Road at Lowther Bridge, which you will recollect just under Brougham about a mile from Penrith. This to my great sorrow! for the manufactured walk, which was absolutely necessary in many places, will in one place pass through a few hundred yards of the forest ground, and will there efface the most beautiful specimen of a forest pathway ever seen by human eyes, and which I have paced many an hour when I was a youth, with some of those I best love. This path winds on under the trees with the wantonness of a River or a living Creature; and even if I may say so with the subtlety of a Spirit, contracting or enlarging itself, visible or invisible as it likes. There is a continued opening between the trees, a narrow slip of green turf besprinkled with Flowers, chiefly Daisies; and here it is, if I may use the same kind of language, that this pretty path plays its pranks, wearing away the turf and flowers at its pleasure. When I took the walk I was speaking of, last summer, it was Sunday. I met several of the People of the Country posting to and from church, in different parts; and in a retired spot by the River-side were two musicians (belonging probably to some corps of volunteers) playing upon the Hautboy and Clarionet. You may guess

¹ Thomas Wilkinson.

I was not a little delighted ; and as you had been a visitor at Lowther, I could not help wishing you were with me. And now I am brought to the sentiment which occasioned this detail, I may say brought back to my subject, which is this, that all just and solid pleasure in natural objects rest upon two pillars, God and Man. Laying out grounds, as it is called, may be considered as a liberal art, in some sort like Poetry and Painting ; and its object, like that of all the liberal arts, is, or ought to be, to move the affections under the controul of good sense ; that is, of the best and the wisest, but speaking with more precision, it is to assist Nature in moving the affections ; and surely, as I have said, the affections of those who have the deepest perception of the beauty of Nature, who have the most valuable feelings, that is, the most permanent, the most independent, the most ennobling, connected with Nature and human life. No liberal art aims merely at the gratification of an individual or a class, the Painter or Poet is degraded in proportion as he does so ; the true servants of the Arts pay homage to the human kind as impersonated in unwarped and enlightened minds. If this be so when we are merely putting together words or colours, how much more ought the feeling to prevail when we are in the midst of the realities of things ; of the beauty and harmony, of the joy and happiness, of living creatures ; of men and children, of birds and beasts, of hills and streams, and trees and flowers ; with the changes of night and day, evening and morning, summer and winter ; and all their unwearied actions and energies, as benign in the spirit that animates them as they are beautiful and grand in that form and clothing which is given to them for the delight of our senses. But I must stop, for you feel these things as deeply as I ; more deeply, if it were only for this, that you have lived longer. What then shall we say of many great mansions with their unqualified expulsion of human creatures from their neighbourhood, happy or not, houses of which what is fabled of the upas-tree is true, that they breathe out death and desolation. I know you will feel with me here, both as a man and a lover and Professor of the Arts. I was glad to hear from Lady Beaumont that you did not think of removing your Village. Of course much here will depend upon circumstances ; above all,

with what kind of inhabitants, from the nature of the employments in that district, the Village is likely to be stocked. But for my part, strip my Neighbourhood of human beings, and I should think it one of the greatest privations I could undergo. You have all the poverty of solitude, nothing of its elevation. In a word, if I were disposed to write a sermon, and this is something like one, upon the subject of taste in natural beauty, I should take for my text the little pathway in Lowther Woods, and all that I had to say would begin and end in the human heart, as under the direction of the divine Nature conferring value on the objects of the senses, and pointing out what is valuable in them.

I began this subject with Coleorton in my thoughts, and a confidence, that whatever difficulties or crosses (as of many good things it is not easy to chuse the best) you might meet with in the practical application of your principles of Taste, yet, being what they are, you will soon be pleased and satisfied. Only (if I may take the freedom to say so) do not give way too much to others; considering what your studies and pursuits have been, your own judgement must be the best: professional men may suggest hints, but I would keep the decision to myself.

Lady Beaumont utters something like an apprehension that the slowness of Workmen, or other impediments, may prevent our families meeting at Coleorton next summer. We shall be sorry for this, the more so as the same cause will hinder your coming hither. At all events, we shall depend upon her frankness, which we take most kindly indeed—I mean, on the promise she has made, to let us know whether you are gotten so far through your work as to make it comfortable for us all to be together.

I cannot close this letter without a word about myself. I am sorry to say I am not yet settled to any serious employment. The expectation of Coleridge not a little unhinges me, and still more, the number of visitors we have had; but winter is approaching, and I have good hopes. I mentioned Michael Angelo's Poetry some time ago; it is the most difficult to construe I ever met with, but just what you would expect from such a man, showing abundantly how conversant his soul was with great things.

There is a mistake in the world concerning the Italian language; the Poetry of Dante and Michael Angelo proves, that if there be little majesty and strength in Italian verse, the fault is in the authors and not in the tongue. I can translate, and have translated, two Books of Ariosto at the rate, nearly, of 100 lines a day, but so much meaning has been put by Michael Angelo into so little room, and that meaning sometimes so excellent in itself, that I found the difficulty of translating him insurmountable. I attempted at least fifteen of the sonnets, but could not anywhere succeed, I have sent you the only one I was able to finish, it is far from being the best or most characteristic, but the others were too much for me.¹

I began this Letter about a week ago, having been interrupted. I mention this, because I have on this account to apologise to Lady Beaumont, and to my Sister also, whose intention it was to have written, but being very much engaged, she put it off as I was writing. We have been weaning Dorothy, and since, she has had a return of the Croup, from an imprudent exposure on a very cold day. But she is doing well again; and my Sister will write very soon. Lady Beaumont inquired how game might be sent us. There is a direct conveyance from Manchester to Kendal by the mail, and a parcel directed for me, to be delivered at Kendal, immediately, to John Brockbank, Ambleside, Postman, would, I dare say, find its way to us expeditiously enough; only you will have the goodness to mention in your Letters when you do send anything, otherwise we may not be aware of any mistake.

I am glad the Houbraken will be acceptable, and will send it any way you shall think proper, though, perhaps, as it would only make a small parcel, there might be some risk in trusting it to the wagon or mail, unless it could be conveniently inquired after. No news of Coleridge. The length of this Letter is quite formidable; forgive it. Farewell—and believe me, my dear Sir George, your truly affectionate Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Address: Sir George Beaumont, Bart., Coleorton Hall, near Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

¹ Here follows Sonnet *Yes: hope may with my strong desire keep pace* (Oxf. W. p. 256) copied by M. W.

OCTOBER 1805

MS. *230. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere October 27th 1805.

My dear Friend

If I make out the date of your letter rightly it is the 20th, and I did not receive it till yesterday evening, so badly is our post managed. I scarcely know how long it is since I wrote to you, it seems so very long. My Brother's letter will have explained why I did not write within the last ten days; in truth I had begun a letter when, with pen and paper ready, he told me he was going to write to Sir George, so I kept back mine, thinking that he might, if I sent it off, persuade himself that his would be more acceptable in a few days, and then that his disposition to procrastinate might get the better of him; besides I am always glad when he writes a letter before he is driven to it by a sense of neglected duty, for in that case it is never anything but a pleasure to him;—not to speak of my habitual feeling that if a letter is to be written by one of us it had better be done by him for the gain of our Friends, though the office in common cases generally devolves upon me.

I truly sympathize with you in your troubles. The interruption of your quiet, in the summer, the season of *your* solitude, is a most serious evil. I had thought of it in my own mind long ago, and of the many discomforts attending upon building, and have heartily grieved that the task should have fallen upon you—your ancestors, perhaps, might not have done it so well, but what matter? You would have had nothing to regret; and perhaps it could not have happened to any two persons to be forced upon an undertaking so much like a business, and into such close concerns with workmen and mere men of business, to whom it would have been so irksome as to Sir George and you, according to my notion of you, and I am sure I seem to know you very well. I have the same kind of pleasure in thinking of you as if I had really seen you. I am reminded of you by things daily before our eyes, just as if you had been often with us, had frequented the same paths and were familiar with the retired places of our valley; yet this does but make me the more desire our meeting—there are times when I even have a painful

sensation from the liveliness of my affection for you in not having a bodily image of you in my mind, and yet I do often fancy I see you, your very countenance, while I am going on thinking without interruption—but I do not know how my pen travels—I was speaking of your building, and most heartily shall I rejoice when the labour is finished. When do you think that this will be?—It is one of our greatest delights to look forward to visiting you at Cole Orton next summer. We talk of it daily, and very sorry should we be to give up the idea, as there will be no chance of your coming to Grasmere. You see how deep-rooted a trust I have in your frankness, else I should not write in this way, but perhaps might set myself to find out reasons why it would be better that we should wait till the summer after, and do my best to reconcile you to it. Johnny is very familiar with your names and talks about the journey. We have had a hundred contrivances as to the manner of our travelling—and they have afforded us no little entertainment. By the bye, we have got a pony, and I, who in my youth could never ride half a dozen miles without great fatigue, have ridden twenty six and was none the worse for it. My eldest Brother was here in the summer, and fearing that I injured myself with walking, being at that time not very strong, he bought the pony for me, and it is of great use to us all; for my Brother can generally borrow a neighbour's horse, when my Sister or I are disposed to ride. About three weeks ago in one of our rides we went round Loughrigg Tarn, and were upon the very ground which Sir George was in treaty about some years since, where we paused long and often, with hearts full of regret that you had not a dwelling there. I think indeed that there is no spot in all this country where grandeur and loveliness are so happily united. I allude to the view upwards from the foot of the Tarn. Wherever seen the deep valley with its small lake appears like the Nest of Quiet itself, and every bank and every bushy slope and every cottage is beautiful; but looking upwards over the green boundary of this simple scene to Langdale Pikes the prospect is most grand and majestic—The Pikes, far off and yet so commanding, and the long distance between, to be filled up by the imagination—a space, a gulph—you know not what

it is, or at least you would often persuade yourself you did not; though it be the solemn Vale of Langdale itself. The weather has been most delightful ever since the season of Autumn, yet with us the trees have not been so beautiful in their *progress* towards decay as usual; till within the last ten days we scarcely could observe one that was not green, which we supposed to be owing to the wetness of the summer. Then came on some frosty nights which snapped off almost all the leaves from many of the ashes in one night, and they lay quite green upon the ground as I have seen them after a spring storm. It was like death by violence, and not a natural decay, a melancholy image! Yet in some parts of the Vale in the more sheltered nooks the trees are now very beautiful, and the Fern upon the mountains is perfectly gorgeous.

After what I have said about riding on horseback so stoutly you will guess that I am pretty well. I do not think I have been on the whole in better health for this long time than at present, though I have fits of illness occasionally, and probably shall have all my life—sickness with head-aches—perhaps it was after one of these attacks that Mr Davy saw me, though indeed I am now much stronger than I was in the summer. I was sure you would be uneasy about us, and that made *me* very uneasy till my Brother had sent off his letter. Before that time I had delayed writing, wishing to do it at my leisure—we had company during the first week or fortnight after I received yours, and afterwards we were weaning Dorothy, and I was her chief nurse, and when this was happily over a slight attack of the croup came on which alarmed us much. Thank God she is now better but we are obliged to be very careful of her, and shall never be free from anxiety till warm weather comes again. She will win her way into your heart I am sure when you know her. She is a remarkably lively Child, but she is far more—she has a manner about her—a set of looks that are all her own, and I am sure must be genius—but poor Darling! we may never get her reared. It is a saying amongst the old wives that a Child is ‘oversensible to live’, and I believe there is more truth in this than one would wish to think. I know the tears came into my eyes the other morning when our Servant, looking at Dorothy,

said to me suddenly 'She has over many pretty ways that Child!' but enough of this melancholy subject—I hope that next summer, or whenever we meet, we may present her to you a rosy-cheeked Maiden, and if she ever casts off her delicate looks we shall part with our fears.

The resemblance between certain parts of the *Lay of the last Minstrel* and *Christabel* must strike everyone who is acquainted with the two poems, and I fear it is to be accounted for by Mr Scott's having heard *Christabel* repeated more than once. I believe that he is entirely unconscious of the imitation, that is, that having been exceedingly delighted with C's poem he was led by it insensibly into the same path, and, even when the words are the very same (which they are in one or two places) I believe he is equally ignorant of it. Coleridge gave a Copy of *Christabel* to a Mr Stoddart who used to recite it at Edinburgh in different companies, and once he did so at W. Scott's house, who being very much struck with it desired him to repeat it again, and, as he told us,¹ he himself could repeat after this a great deal of it—he said to us that at that time he had begun his poem and was much delighted to meet with so happy a specimen of the same kind of irregular metre which he had adopted. This was when we were in Scotland, and he recited to us a part of the Poem which he was then composing. We were struck with the resemblance yet we were both equally convinced from the frankness of Walter Scott's manner that it was an unconscious imitation. Since *the Lay of the last Minstrel* has been published, William has blamed himself exceedingly for not having mentioned to Walter Scott the apprehension that he had that the style of his Poem had been, and would be in its future progress, influenced by this acquaintance with *Christabel*, and also that he did not point out one expression which was the same—he thought he could not do it with propriety, being self-introduced at S's house that very day and they having known nothing of each other before. It is true we saw a good deal of him before we left that part of Scotland, and I think William might have done it, but he had not the resolution, and, as I have said, he very much regrets it. For my part I do not think

¹ During the first Scotch Tour, Sept. 17-23, 1803.

the Imitations are of so much importance, Coleridge's poem bearing upon its face so bold a character of origi[nality], and I cannot but add being so very much superior to the other, but my Brother and Sister think that the Lay being published first, it will tarnish the freshness of *Christabel*, and considerably injure the first effect of it. At any rate this circumstance shows how cautious Poets ought to be in lending their manuscripts, or even reading them to Authors. If they came refreshed out of the Imitator's brain, it would not be so grievous, but they are in general like faded impressions, or as the wrong side of a piece of Tapestry to the right.

Your Sister would not talk of returning next summer if she had not considerable hope of it. Most earnestly do I wish that she may not be disappointed. I need not say what satisfaction we should have in being introduced by you to your Sister's society. All that you have told me of her makes me esteem and love her for her own sake, and I could not but love her for yours. We hear no more of Coleridge. I was at Keswick not long ago where I saw Mrs C. and Hartley and Sara. Derwent is with Miss Hutchinson to his great improvement—he was cowardly and effeminate and indolent before he went, and is now become even daring and active—formerly he would never leave the parlour fire and now he roams far and wide in the fields by himself, and is very fond of riding on horseback. Hartley is much stouter and taller, and I hope will grow up a healthy Boy. Sara is puny and often ailing. Mrs Coleridge is quite well; she grows exceedingly fat.

I am ashamed to send off this long letter so soon after William's long one—he has cast his eyes over my two sheets of paper, and makes so loud an exclamation against me and himself that I am almost tempted to keep back what I have written and try to send you a *one-sheet* letter of a reasonable length. I am sure that all that it was necessary that I should say might have been got into a tenth of the room. But I was determined to write to you at leisure and this is the fruit of it! . . . but you will excuse me and read with patience as heretofore.

The game will be very acceptable and I hope it will reach us safely. It was very kind of you to think of sending it.

OCTOBER 1805

My Sister sends her best regards to you. She was not very well before she weaned the Child, but I hope she will now grow stronger. Farewell! May God bless you, my dear Friend,

Believe me ever faithfully yours

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Have you heard any thing further of the young poetess or seen any other of her compositions? If I live till she arrives at womanhood I shall anxiously look for what comes of these early promises.

For this month past we have had no Tourists, and a fortnight ago our poor Friend Mrs Clarkson left us, so we are now entirely alone, and if the children are well and we are free from anxiety I hope we shall have leisure, and that my Brother may begin in good earnest with his important Task. Mr. Davy perhaps mentioned to you that he read a part of the Recluse to him. When I speak of too much company do not suppose but that we have great joy at sight of some who do come—such a man as Mr Davy is a treasure anywhere. This moment I recollect, speaking of him, that you asked if my Brother intended publishing some smaller poems—he has certainly talked of it, but I do not think he will—more of this when I next write. I had entirely forgotten your inquiries.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Cole Orton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS. 231. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Grasmere—Monday, November 4th [1805]

My dear Friend,

Many thanks for the Game and your kind letter, which we received last night; the conveyance was most expeditious, and not an hour's time was lost to us at Ambleside, for my Brother happened to be there when the post arrived at ten o'clock, so he came trotting home with it by moonlight, the pannier before him on his white pony. We had gone out to meet him at the door, and not less anxious than the Vicar of Wakefield's

Daughters when they greeted Moses on his return from the fair, we called out: 'What have you got there?' but in the same breath we answered ourselves: "'Tis the game from Coleorton!'

William and my Sister had been spending three days at Patterdale and Park House, and in the afternoon returned over Kirkstone; she left him at Ambleside thinking I should be anxious for their return, and he stayed to see the Newspapers, in the hope that they might bring more authentic details of the event of the great Battle. There was nothing but a confirmation of the general belief that it was as bad as possible, but my Brother still hopes that it will not prove so. We are very anxious to know the truth. For my part I was, like you, quite overwhelmed with the disastrous tidings¹ contained in three newspapers, which I received at one time, while they were absent, and read over by my solitary fireside till I could not endure the pain of my own thoughts. Indeed there is no other consolation but in the sense of our short-sightedness, when we read of these triumphs of foolishness, pride and cruelty—the good will believe, and cannot but believe that in the end peace will grow out of these many sorrows, and mankind bettered, though the way before us be so dark and perhaps so sorrowful.

The weather is now more delicious than ever! what a contrast in the silence of the air, the clear sky, and the peacefully decaying trees to the turbulence of men! I never felt this so deeply as last Saturday just before the parcel of newspapers was put into my hands. I took a long walk with your Goddaughter in my arms, who is perfectly well and seemed scarcely less to feel the pleasure of the warm sunshine and the beautiful objects of nature than I did myself. She can walk alone, and attempts to imitate everything that is said.

You asked me about my Brother's small poems. It is true that he has sometimes talked of publishing a few of the longest of them; but he has now entirely given up the idea—he has a great dislike to all the business of publishing—but that is not his reason—he thinks that having been so long silent to the world he ought to come forward again with a work of greater labour; and has many other lesser objections.

¹ Probably the capitulation of Ulm, Oct. 19.

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Again we all thank you for the game. It will almost make epicures of us—coming from you it will be such a feast, and we have had already another pleasure from it. Having a [] neighbour who is of Leicestershire we [sent] her a brace of the Partridges, and she esteems them as a great prize. We are very glad that you are going on so comfortably with your Building, and above all that Sir George's health is so much improved.

Adieu, my dear Friend,

Believe me very affectionately yours

D. Wordsworth.

I sent you a most unreasonably long letter a few days ago.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Coleorton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche, Leicestershire.

MS.

232. D. W. to Lady Beaumont

Patterdale. Thursday 7th November [1805]

My dear Friend,

Being at Patterdale on a rainy day I am at perfect leisure, and I think I cannot do better than transcribe for you a poem which my Brother wrote the day before yesterday. We left home yesterday morning.¹ I rode upon my little pony and William walked by my side. We came over Kirkstone and had a very pleasant journey though the day was misty; and at the top of Kirkstone we could not see fifty yards around us. We were very anxious to visit some of the Vales tributary to Uls-water, where we have never been before, while yet the brown leaves are upon some of the trees; but I am afraid it must not

¹ A record by D. W. of this expedition is given in vol. v of the *Transactions of the Wordsworth Society*; and of this W. W. inserted an altered version at the end of his *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes* (1835); in both instances the day of the month is throughout given a day later than it should be. They left Grasmere on Wednesday, Nov. 6. The proposed return on Friday the 8th was given up, and on Saturday, the 9th, they went to stay with the Hutchinsons at Park House, and on the 11th saw Thomas Wilkinson of Yanwath with a view to arranging the purchase of Broadhow in Patterdale, which was effected in 1806. They returned to Grasmere on the 12th.

be this year, for the weather seems broken. We are in the house of a Friend,¹ a comfortable Cottage most happily situated in the main Vale above the Lake of Ulswater. From this room I look over the level bed of the valley, intersected with hedgerows (it seems as level as a bowling-green); horses and cows are feeding in the fields which are of a soft yellow hue, through which you hardly perceive the tinge of the fading green, a colour that harmonizes exquisitely with that of the trees upon the mountain opposite, where a thick cloud is resting; and through that veil rocks and craggy points now appear, and then are hidden again. My dear Lady Beaumont, this is a wonderful country; the more wonderful, the more we know of it, much as the Tourists stare at our great rocks while they wheel along the turnpike-roads. Yesterday we had visions of things, imperfectly seen as we passed along, that might have employed our fancy happily for hours, if they had not in the next moment been replaced by others as beautiful. This Dale has not yet been intruded upon by any of the Fancy-builders—there is only one offensive object, the house of Mr Mounsey, the King of Patterdale, and that is chiefly ugly from the Colour which has been so cried out against that he intends to change it next summer. But poor Grasmere is a devoted place! You may remember that I spoke of the white-washing of the Church, and six years ago a trim Box was erected on a hill-side; it is surrounded with fir and larch plantations, that look like a blotch or scar on the fair surface of the mountain. Luckily these deformities are not visible in the grand view of the Vale. But alas! poor Grasmere! The first object which now presents itself after you have clomb the hill from Rydale is Mr Crump's newly-erected large mansion, staring over the Church Steeple, its foundation under the crags being much above the top of the Steeple. Then a farmhouse opposite to ours, on the other side of the Lake, has been taken by a dashing man from Manchester, who no doubt will make a *fine place* of it, and, as he has taken the Island too, will probably erect a pavilion upon it, or it may be an Obelisk. This is not all. A very beautiful little Estate has been purchased in the more retired part of the Vale, and the first thing the Gentleman has done preparatory

¹ Mrs. Luff.

to building his house, has been to make a *Sunk Fence*, which you overlook on every side from the rocks, thickets, and green sloping hills! Add to all that Sir Michael Fleming has been getting his woods appraised, and after Christmas the Ax is to be lifted against them, and not one tree left, so the whole Eastern side of the Lake will be entirely naked, even to the very edge of the water! but what could we expect better from Sir Michael? who has been building a long high wall under the grand woods behind his house which cuts the hill in two by a straight line; and to make his doings visible to all men, he has white-washed it, as white as snow. One who could do this wants a sense which others have. To him there is no *Spirit in the Wood*.¹ I must add to my lamentations for the fate of Grasmere one consolation for you; that our regrets at parting with it will be more than half spent before we go; and that in fact we begin already to think that there may be many places which we should now prefer.

I seem to have forgotten my object, which was to transcribe my Brother's Poem, and forgotten too his exclamations against my last *long* letter. The poem, which as it pleases me so much I feel assured will please you, was suggested by a very beautiful passage in a Journal of a Tour among the Highlands, by Thomas Wilkinson the person mentioned by my Brother to Sir George as employed by Lord Lowther to regulate the improvements in his grounds.

[Here follows '*The Solitary Reaper*' exactly as it appeared in the Edition of 1807.]

I was glad, to hear that you were so much pleased with the Translation from Michael Angelo—I think it is very happily done, and a very fine Sonnet—I wish my Brother could have done more in testimony of his reverence for so great a man, but he finds so much thought in the poems and the Italian so difficult that he has tried in vain. Adieu—I write with a party talking round me—excuse blunders. It is now eight o'clock in the evening. Since I began in the morning we have had a most enchanting walk, and we hope to have a fine day tomorrow, when we shall return to Grasmere. On Saturday we shall feast

¹ Cf. *Nutting* (Oxf. W., p. 186).

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on the Leicestershire hare and drink a bumper to your healths
by our own fire-side. Farewell! believe me ever your affectionate
and faithful Friend

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Coleorton Hall, Ashby de la Zouche,
Leicestershire.

MS. 233. *W. W. to Walter Scott*

Lockhart(—) *M*(—) *G*(—) *K*(—)

Patterdale, November 7th, 1805.

My dear Scott,

You have already had proof what a trespasser I am in the way of Letters, and I have as heretofore presumed on your indulgence. Your Letter was very welcome. I am not apt to haunt myself with fears of accident from flood and field,¹ etc., it was nevertheless pleasant to hear that you had got home well. I regret with you that Mrs Scott should have been so far incommoded by her situation; I have no doubt however that she found pleasure enough to recompense her for the trouble she was at. I often think with delight of the few days when you were with us, and live in hope that we may enjoy something of the same kind at some future period.

I should like exceedingly to meet you somewhere next summer, either here or in your own Country, or both; and certainly (if an engagement, under which I am at present partly bound, does not take place) shall do so, provided you have as much leisure and inclination as I. I long much to see more of Scotland, both North and South; it is (not excepting the Alps) the most poetical Country I ever travelled through.

Like you, I had been sadly disappointed with Todd's *Spenser*; not with the *Life*, which I think has a sufficient share of merit; though the matter is badly put together; but three parts of four of the *Notes* are absolute trash. That style of compiling notes ought to be put an end to. I was much pleased to hear of your engagement with Dryden; not that he is, as a *Poet*, any great favourite of mine. I admire his talents and Genius greatly, but

¹ *Othello*, I. iii. 135.

he is not a poetical genius. The only qualities I can find in Dryden that are *essentially* poetical are a certain ardour and impetuosity of mind with an excellent ear: it may seem strange that I do not add to this great command of language; *that* he certainly has, and of such language, too, as it is most desirable that a Poet should possess, or rather, that he should not be without; but it is not language that is, in the high sense of the word poetical, being neither of the imagination nor of the passions; I mean of the amiable the ennobling or intense passions; I do not mean to say that there is nothing of this in Dryden, but as little, I think, as is possible, considering how much he has written. You will easily understand my meaning when I refer to his versification of *Palamon and Arcite*, as contrasted with the language of Chaucer. Dryden has neither a tender heart nor a lofty sense of moral dignity: where his language is poetically impassioned, it is mostly upon unpleasing subjects; such as the follies, vices, and crimes of classes of men or of individuals. That his cannot be the language of imagination must have necessarily followed from this, that there is not a single image from Nature in the whole body of his works; and in his translation from Virgil, whenever Virgil can be fairly said to have his *eye* upon his object, Dryden always spoils the passage.

But too much of this; I am glad that you are to be his editor: his political and satirical Poems may be greatly benefited by illustration, and even absolutely require it. It has struck me as being not impossible but that from your connection with the Buccleugh family you may be enabled to learn something about the Duke of Monmouth that may be interesting, and perhaps of Shaftesbury:—I wish it were in my power to do any service to your Book: I have read Dryden's Works (all but his plays) with great attention, but my observations refer entirely to matters of taste; and things of this kind appear better anywhere than when tagged to a Poet's works, where they are absolute impertinences. In the beginning of the *Absalom* etc. you find an allusion to a freak or revel of the Duke of Monmouth of rather a serious kind (Ammon's murder). This I remember is mentioned in Andrew Marvel's Poems, which I have not seen

these many many years, but which I think you might peep into with advantage for your work. One or two of the Prologues may be illustrated from Cibber's *Apology*.

A correct text is the first object of an editor; then such notes as explain difficult or unintelligible passages, or throw light upon them; and lastly, which is of much less importance, notes pointing out passages or authors to which the Poet has been indebted, not in the piddling way of a phrase here and phrase there (which is detestable as a general practice), but where the Poet has really had essential obligations either as to matter or manner.

Let me hear from you as soon as convenient: if I can be of any use, do not fail to apply to me. One thing I may take the liberty to suggest, which is, when you come to the *Fables*, might it not be advisable to print the whole of the *Tales* of Boccace in a smaller type in the original language? If this should look too much like swelling a Book, I should certainly make such extracts as would shew where Dryden had most strikingly improved upon or fallen below, his original. I think his translations from Boccace are the best, at least the most poetical of his Poems. It is many years since I saw Boccace, but I remember that Sigismunda is not married by him to Guiscard (the names are different in Boccace in both tales, I believe, certainly in Theodore, etc.). I think Dryden has much injured the story by the marriage, and degraded Sigismunda's character by it. He has also, to the best of my remembrance, degraded her character still more by making her love absolute sensuality and appetite (Dryden had no other notion of the passion). With all these defects, and they are very gross ones, it is a noble Poem. Guiscard's answer, when first reproached by Tancred, is noble in Boccace,—nothing but this: *Amor può molto più che ne voi ne io possiamo*. This, Dryden has spoiled: he says first very well, 'The faults of love by love are justified,' and then come four lines of miserable rant, quite à la Maximin.

I will transcribe the Glenaldmond, do I spell right? which you will like better as coming from Patterdale whence I now write being on a visit to a Friend.

[Poem follows as in Oxf. W., p. 288, but in l. 29 And for Yet]

NOVEMBER 1805

I long to know, as I hope I shall from Southey, how you liked the old Manuscript. I thought it looked rather promising. My Sister is with me and desires best remembrances to Mrs Scott and yourself. Farewell and believe me your very affectionate Friend

Wm. Wordsworth.

Address: Walter Scott Esq., Ashy-Steele by Selkirk, Scotland;
readdressed: Castle Street, Edinburgh.

MS. 234. W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.

(W. writes)

Grasmere, 20th November [1805]

Dear Richard

I am extremely perplexed about the income tax; and wish very much to know from you immediately how I ought to give in my income. At present I have sent it in thus

£

48. from annuity payable by Basil Montagu Esq^r

23.10 from Mary's property in the funds

2.10 from my estate at Applethwaite.

I have taken no notice of Lord Lowther's money and that which poor John owed me; not knowing how to send it in. I have understood that you paid for this and for Dorothy's share: if so I should imagine it cannot be so advantageous for us as if we paid ourselves directly: as your income will be much above 160£ per annum and I understand the deduction is greater from incomes above that amount. But be so good as to tell me what is best to be done; with particulars about the stock as the Tax gatherer here is perpetually pestering me with Letters which I know not how to answer.

Captain and Mrs Wordsworth called here yesterday, having been at Ulverstone—they were both well.

I was at Park House a few days ago and went to see the field your new purchase on the Cumberland side: it is a beautiful situation; but I think it worth while to tell you that the Wife of the Tenant now in the Cottage adjoining the High Road, I was

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informed, bears a bad Character: she was tenant to a person at Stainton under somewhat similar circumstances, and he discharged her because she was accustomed to harbour Potters and Vagrants and turn their beasts into his Fields. She is now more conveniently situated for a repetition of like offences, and there appears to be reason to tremble for your Haystacks as any Depredations thereon will be laid upon the sheep in the field. I desired Sara Hutchinson to request her Brother Tom who was not at home to inform Mr Hutton of these circumstances; she is, I was told further, a woman of very loose character.

Pray have the goodness to write immediately—we are all very well. Best love to Christopher and his wife.

Your affectionate Br

Wm. Wordsworth.

Have you paid the money to Mr. Sotheby?

(*D. writes*)

My dear Brother,

I cannot let this letter go without telling you how much pleasure we have already had from the pony. Its paces suit me exactly. I have ridden to and from Park House upon it, and to Keswick and back in one day without the least fatigue, and we very often take shorter rides, but I am sorry to add that we are afraid we shall be obliged to change it as it stumbles very much—once it fell with Mary. I am very sorry, as it suits me so well in every other respect. Mary joins us in kind Love

Your affectionate Sister

D. Wordsworth.

Address: Mr. Wordsworth, No. 11 Staple Inn, London.

MS. 235. *D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Friday evening—Grasmere, November 29th [1805].

I received the first of your short letters on Monday, the second not till today: judge of the mismanagement of our Post-office!—regular office indeed we have none, but the Post now comes four

times a week ; yet (so do they arrange it) on the Sunday evenings he brings as many letters as all the rest of the week put together. I do not know why I have troubled you with this my lamentation at this time except that in future it may serve to explain to you if there should be any extraordinary delay when you may have written what may demand an immediate answer. My Brother and Sister are at Park House. She left home last Monday, and William yesterday morning ; and I do not expect them at home before the end of next week. Perhaps my Sister may stay longer, as she is still not in *strong* health, and we think that change of air may be of service to her. She will bring Miss Hutchinson to spend the winter with us.

My dear Lady Beaumont, you are so affectionate and kind to me that I often feel a restless desire that you should know me better, which impels me to write to you ; for while I write I seem to draw nearer to you and to bring you more near to me. I have many dear and chearful thoughts, and many melancholy ones in my solitude—these I sometimes seek, but at others they master me, and I turn my cowardly heart to some other employment. I read, I copy some of my Brother's Poems (a work which he has left me to do) or I write a letter. The Children are now in bed. The evening is very still, and there are no indoor sounds but the ticking of our Family watch which hangs over the chimney-piece under the drawing of the Applethwaite Cottage, and a breathing or a beating of one single irregular Flame in my fire. No one who has not been an Inmate with Children in a *Cottage* can have a notion of the quietness that takes possession of it when they are gone to sleep. The hour before is generally a noisy one, often given up to boisterous efforts to amuse them, and the noise is heard in every corner of the house—then comes the washing and undressing, a work of misery, and in ten minutes after, all is stillness and perfect rest. It is at all times a sweet hour to us, but I can fancy that I have never enjoyed it so much as now that I am quite alone. Yet it is a strange kind of pleasure, for the Image of our departed Brother haunts me with many a pang in the midst of happy recollections of him and glorious hopes—he loved this fireside—he paced over this floor in pride before we had been six weeks in the house, exulting within his

noble heart that his Father's Children had once again a home together. We did not know on what day he would come, though we were expecting him every hour, therefore he had no reason to fear that he should surprize us suddenly; yet twice did he approach the door and lay his hand upon the latch, and stop, and turn away without the courage to enter (we had not met for several years)—he then went to the Inn and sent us word that he was come. This will give you a notion of the depth of his affections, and the delicacy of his feelings. While he stayed with us he busied himself continually with little schemes for our comfort. At this moment when I cast my eyes about I scarcely see anything that does not remind me of some circumstance of this kind, and my tears *will* flow by fits in spite of my inner and habitual sense of the many consolations which he has left for us (chiefly in his innocent life and noble death) and that all our regrets are selfish. *His* Hope, and mine, our Brother William, is yet spared to me—and I have many blessings which poor John did not share; he knew and affectionately loved my Sister, but he never saw her after her marriage, and he had only heard the names of their dear Children.—Oh! what a beautiful spectacle are they, as I have just left them this evening upon their pillows! how divine an image of peace!—But I was seeking consolation, and I find I am further from it for then came a bitter pang—I was weak enough to grieve for *his* Loss, thinking what happiness would have been his, could he have beheld their blessed countenances.

I begin again after a pause—Poor Coleridge! we must not talk of him. I hope we shall not see him this winter; yet I cannot in my mind depend upon it, for *I know* that his earnest desire to return is the cause of his silence—he has nothing decisive to communicate and therefore has not heart to write. Heaven preserve him from captivity in France!

The very morning after I wrote to you the tidings of Lord Nelson's Fate reached us at Patterdale. We were at Breakfast when Mr Luff's maidservant opened the door, and shewing only her head, with an uncouth stare and a grin of pleasure told us that there had been a great victory,¹ and Lord Nelson was shot.

¹ The Battle of Trafalgar, Oct. 21.

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It was a blow. I was not collected enough to doubt, and burst into tears; but William would not believe all at once, and forced me to suspend my grief till he had made further inquiries. At the Inn we were told that there were 'great rejoicings at Penrith—all the Bells ringing'. 'Then' I exclaimed 'he cannot be dead!' but we soon heard enough to leave us without a doubt, and bitterly did we lament for him and our Country. Your account of what you have heard of him interests me very much. I believe that every truly *brave* Man, in the highest sense of the word, is, as you describe Lord Nelson to have been, tender and humane in all the daily acts of life.

I was sure that you would be pleased with the stanzas on the solitary Reaper. There is something inexpressibly soothing to me in the sound of those two Lines

Oh listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound—

I often catch myself repeating them in disconnection with any thought, or even I may say recollection of the Poem.

My Brother has not yet begun fairly with his great work, but I hope he will after his return from Park house. We shall then in right earnest enjoy winter quiet and loneliness; besides, starlight walks and winter winds are his delight—his mind I think is often more fertile in this season than any other. I am now engaged in making a fair and final transcript of the Poem on his own Life.—I mean *final*, till it is prepared for the press, which will not be for many years. No doubt before that time he will, either from the suggestions of his Friends or his own or both have some alterations to make, but it appears to us at present to be finished.

We were very sorry that Sir George had not been well. My Brother entreats that he will not write to him till he can do it with perfect ease and comfort. He prizes Sir George's letters most highly; but I can assure you, he never suffers himself to expect them, and would be very much hurt were he to attempt to write to him when it was an effort. You do not tell me whither you are going from Aston—probably to Dunmow, before you settle in London for the winter. Coleridge gave us such a

description¹ of Sir George's venerable Mother, whom he had the happiness of seeing at Dunmow, as inspired me with reverence and admiration. Pray tell me if she continues to enjoy the same excellent health and chearful spirits. Have you heard from your Sister again? I cannot express how much pleasure it gives me when you speak of her. I had almost forgotten to tell you that we were at Lowther three days after I wrote from Patterdale. We walked through the woods and along the Forest path which my Brother described to you—but it was not the time to see its beauties for there were no daisies or other flowers and the very line of the path was invisible, the whole ground being covered with leaves. Thomas Wilkinson (the Quaker) who was our Guide, mentioned to us that he had seen a Gentleman just come from Coleorton who had been among the woods for many hours in search of the path, but could not find it. We wished we could have seen him, and my Brother sent a message to him to request that if he came into our neighbourhood he would have the goodness to call upon him. We spent a delightful day at Lowther—indeed the whole week was delightful—we ranged from one beautiful scene to another. I came home in perfect health, and we boasted of my wonderful strength; but last week I was confined to my bed four days by a violent pain in my left side. I was bled, blistered, etc. and am now perfectly well, and the apothecary tells me I have no reason to apprehend a return of the disease in consequence of having once had it. It being a new disease, I believe I was unduly alarmed, else now that it is over, I think I should not have thought it worth while to mention it to you.

At another time I should have told you *by way of Consolation* on coming to the end of this letter, that it may probably be a long time before you receive another of equal length, for when our household is gathered together again I shall have less leisure; but you so kindly encourage me to believe that all that happens to us is interesting to you, that I am not afraid that even *this* letter will tire you. Believe me I consider your delight in hearing from me as a sure proof of your affection; for what have I to communicate but our daily goings-on (which hardly vary from

¹ v. *Letters of S. T. C.* (1895), ii. 459.

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day to day) and my own peculiar feelings; and to make these interesting love must be in your heart.

Adieu, my good and dear Friend,

Your ever affectionate

Dorothy Wordsworth.

I do not know whether I gave you a distinct notion of Sir Michael's white wall. It is high upon the hillside—directly under the woods behind his house, which are backed by the mountains of Rydale head. This wall many would take for a bleaching yard, only that linen cloth is generally bleached in a low meadow by a riverside. It is like a piece of broad-cloth hung upon tenters as you see them in Yorkshire, only twice the length of an ordinary piece of cloth, and perhaps three times the breadth. This white line entirely destroys the grandeur and simplicity of the Recess or mountain cove behind his house.

On looking again at the date of your last I find I am mistaken; I thought it had been written the day after the former letter.

I am reading Rosco's *Leo the tenth*—I have only got through the first chapter which I found exceedingly interesting. The whole Book can scarcely be so interesting to me.

Do not think yourself bound to write to me except when you have time and opportunity. Only let us know if any evil befalls you or yours, and I shall never wonder at your silence, or be uneasy.

Address: Lady Beaumont, North Aston, Woodstock, Oxfordshire.

MS. 236. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson
K(—)

Saturday December 11th 1805.

My dear Friend,

We have long expected to hear from you with great anxiety. I hope you are not travelling now.—I would gladly hope that you are in your Father's house. We heard of you from Robert Forster, that you were well and cheerful a short while after you wrote to us from Settle. I have for many days been intending to send you a copy of a Poem which William has written for the *Journal* suggested by that beautiful passage in Thomas Wilkinson's *Tour*, about the solitary Highland Lass singing at her

harvest work, but I put off in the hope of hearing from you. I will transcribe the poem, but I now write upon a different business. You must know that the third part of my journal is *lost irrecoverably*. We sent it by the carrier in a parcel of other things to Mary who is at Park house. Within a mile from his house, in going up the Rays,¹ the carrier missed it from his cart, turned back immediately and every possible search was made but no parcel to be found. He had met a man in going up the Rays who no doubt had picked it up before he went to search for it. Nobody knows the name of the Man, but the Turnpike Girl recollected his Person, and he passed through the Gate the next day, and she asked him if he had seen such a parcel to which he replied very saucily 'that if he had found such a thing did she suppose he would not have delivered it to the Carriers?' We have no doubt that he picked it up and probably has destroyed the manuscripts that they might not lead to his detection. The parcel also contained 5 Books of William's poem. Of course we should not have parted with it if we had not had another copy—the fact is I am employed in making a fair transcript of it for ourselves, had proceeded so far, and we were sending the old Copy for Mary to make transcript of it, as a gift to be presented to Coleridge on his return. It is very mortifying as she has no employment at Park house, and C will arrive before it can be done, at least we hope so—for he is on his way home. Mrs. C has received a letter in which he says that he shall set off in a few days by way of Vienna, and we learn from Miss Lamb that her Brother has had a letter from Dr. Stoddart from Malta who tells him that Coleridge had written to him from Trieste on his way home. You will partake with us in the *anxiety* of expectation. For this cause I have been slow to tell you that he was coming, otherwise I should have written the moment that we heard (it is now more than a week since the news came) but for my own part I was at first so much shocked at the idea of his passing through that miserable country that I wished I had not known it till the danger was passed, and I thought it would be a kindness not to be in a hurry to tell you. William says he has little or no fear that he may not

¹ The Rays: i.e. Dunmail Raise.

be able to keep out of the way of the French Armies and that if it be possible he *will*, we can none of us doubt. Southey says that he must have reached Vienna before the French got possession of it, and that he would most likely wheel round and pass through some parts of Hungary and Prussia. It will be a terribly long journey in this cold season, and it is impossible not to have fears for his health; but it is astonishing what he can bear when his mind is at work with his body, and difficulties do but make [him] more vigorous. Perhaps he may be detained at Hamburgh after all by the freezing of the Elbe, and we may yet be long before we are out of suspense. Mary has been at Park house since last Monday fortnight and will stay till after Christmas Day. I shall begin to want sadly to see her again, and poor soul! I am afraid she will be almost hurt by her longings after home—she stays till Miss Weir comes to see her, and afterwards a few days longer, because Sara cannot come till she has had her Christmas company. I have Hannah Lewthwaite to help to nurse—and all goes on well with us. Dorothy has had no croup since Mary left us, really a thriving-looking Lass with rosy cheeks. John is a smart Boy—very tractable with gentle treatment, and neither fears cold, nor rain, nor snow. Mary looked wretchedly before she left home, but if she has not consented to stay over-long I hope she will return mended in her health. William has been with her at Brougham¹—I was a week sole housekeeper and he leaves me again to-morrow for a few days; he will join Sara at Threlkeld and go with her to Park house—she has been a week at Keswick. But I shall leave no room for the Poem. I have to request that you will employ the person who transcribes for Mr. Clarkson to make a copy of the third part of the Journal. You will be so good as to pay him what is proper for it and you may perhaps have an opportunity of sending it by some person from London. If not, it would not be unsafe, I think, to send it up to London by some person going from Bury who might see it booked and send it by the Penrith Mail directed c/o Miss Monkhouse, Penrith—for Miss Hutchinson. I had written a few words in the last copy to introduce the poem, but as I do not recollect the preceding passage I cannot do it over again now,

¹ Brougham Hall, tenanted at this time by Capt. John W. (senior).

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but I will send the part up to you for your copy after I receive the transcript. In the mean time you can leave a small blank—no you cannot—for I cannot point out the passage, so I will merely send you the poem for your pleasure.

[*Here follows the poem*]

I have written the first 4 lines of the poem as though they were only two. I should wish the person who copies to leave blank

I need not say write as soon as possible. I cannot express how much we wish to hear from you. God bless you for ever my dear, dear Friend. Kindest love to Mr. C and you.

MS. 237. D. W. to Catherine Clarkson

Sunday, 22nd December [1805.]

My dear Friend,

If you have received my last letter you will have learnt that we are in daily expectation of Coleridge's arrival in England—I directed my letter (as I shall this) to your Father's, but I did not direct it to be forwarded. I requested that you would be so good as to employ a person to transcribe the *third part* of my journal, our copy of that part having been *lost* in a parcel which we sent by the carrier to Mary at Park house. I now write to beg that you will get it copied as soon as possible, and send it by the coach (if you happen to be in a place from which it can be sent, and where there is any person who will undertake the job) directed to Mr. Richard Wordsworth, Attorney at Law, No. 11 Staple Inn, London. *To be forwarded to Grasmere by Mr. Bragge.* You must know that Mr. Bragge passed by our door yesterday in his way to London and will return in about 5 weeks, and we think we are not likely to have so good an opportunity again. I hope there will be some schoolmaster or somebody or other whom you may employ to transcribe it—and you will be so good as to pay what is proper for his trouble. Perhaps Mr. Bragge may return sooner than he talked of therefore it will be best to lose no time. I am very sorry to trouble you about it. We are exceedingly anxious to hear from

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you. Surely this letter will find you at Bury, I hope my other did also, for there has not yet been time for an answer. William was at Park house last week. Mary pretty well, we expect her at home on Friday. Molly is waiting to carry this letter to Rydale, so Farewell and may God bless you my dear Friend.

Yours ever

D. Wordsworth.

I think it will be proper to write a line to my B^r. R^d. to inform him when and by what coach the parcel is sent, that he may inquire for it. I shall write to him to tell him that it is to be sent and what is to be done with it.

MS. 238. *W. W. and D. W. to Richard W.*

(*W. writes*)

Christmas Day [1805].

Dear Richard,

Mr Bragg was so good as to take charge of a Book to be delivered by him to you. This Book is of very great value, and I beg you would have the kindness to put it by in a safe place: and when a Servant of Sir George Beaumont calls for it see that it is delivered to him. My Sister has written to Lady Beaumont to this effect so that no doubt they will send for it.

Mr Bragg also offered to bring down anything for me which I might want: you will receive a parcel from Mrs Clarkson by the Coach from Norfolk, this is a Manuscript of value, will you see that it is safely put into Mr Bragg's hands. Also request from me that Christopher would let you have that Copy of Vincent Bourne's poems which I left at Cambridge, and send this by the same means; and if there should be any other book which Christopher thinks would interest me in this retirement and which he can spare beg him to have the kindness to give it to you to forward to me by this opportunity. Do not forget these requests on any account!

I wrote to you some time ago about the Income tax wishing to know in what way ours could be given in to be the least burthensome. Persons under sixty Pounds a year I understand

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pay nothing: could not we take advantage of this in some way; at least do tell me what is best to be done.

I requested likewise to know whether you have paid the money to Mr. Sotheby, Upper Seymour Street. Coleridge is expected every hour and will be greatly hurt to find I have disappointed him. It is most likely he will be able to replace the money immediately as he has I know remitted £200 to Mrs Coleridge.

I have owed 60£ for some time to the Editor of the Courier which I have requested Coleridge to call upon you for, so that you will let him have money to that amount, which he will pay the Person to whom I owe it.

We are all well. Do not forget our best love to Christopher and Priscilla, and tell us how they and the little one are. Farewell,

Your affectionate Br

W. Wordsworth.

(*D. writes*)

My dear Richard,

Give my kind Love to Christ^r and Priscilla, and their little Boy—tell me if he is at all like Dorothy or John. I often ride upon the Pony. My health is better.

Mary is at Park house. She comes home today. Captain and Mrs Wordsworth will shortly be in London. They said they hoped they should see a good deal of Christ^r and Priscilla. We shall soon have occasion to draw upon you for 40 or 50£. Many happy Christmases and happy years to you!

Your affectionate Sister

Dorothy Wordsworth.

Address: Richard Wordsworth Esq., Staple Inn, London.

MS.

239. *D. W. to Catherine Clarkson*

K(—)

Grasmere, Christmas Day 1805.

My dear Friend,

I have taken a large sheet of paper with intent to ransack my Brain in search of all that has happened among us since your departure in order that I may at least try to satisfy you with

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a long letter—a long letter is all you ask for and I am not afraid that you should think it dull, though indeed I seem to have nothing to tell you. William walked to Ambleside on Monday evening and brought me your letter, which has given us the truest pleasure—bringing us such good tidings of the state of your health. I am most glad that you have been so happy among your old Friends.

I do not think anything which may be numbered among the *accidents* of life is so delightful as the meeting again the companions of one's youth after a long separation, when it does not end in disappointment, which, alas! too often happens. You will think me an expensive correspondent for only three days ago I sent off a scrap of a letter entirely worthless for its own sake, which I wish I had had the good fortune to have kept till yours arrived. It is indeed very vexatious about the loss of the Journal for you will have a great deal of trouble. This is what I chiefly grieve for, as the expense of transcribing etc. we shall pay most chearfully, being so glad that it was not a total loss of so large a portion of the record of our travels. Indeed for other reasons William values it so highly that I can scarcely say what I would not have given rather than lose it entirely. Perhaps you may remember that this is my birthday. This day I have completed my 34th year. Six Christmases have we spent at Grasmere, and though the freshness of life was passed away even when we came hither, I think these years have been the very happiest of my life,—at least, they seem as if they would bear looking back upon better than any other,—though my heart flutters and aches, striving to call to my mind more perfectly the remembrance of some of the more thoughtless pleasures of former years, and though till within this late time I never experienced a real affliction.

Poor John was in London last Christmas, all his heart set upon the accomplishment of that fatal voyage as the termination of his Labours, and so it proved, and to him, a happy and glorious termination of them,—to us only the sorrow and pain. And dear and blessed creature, he, in those last moments of Trial, bequeathed us a large share of consolation and ennobling thoughts, and confident trust in the goodness of divine pro-

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vidence. But my heart fills fast and I shall betray myself into tears and grief, and give you pain also. In numbering over the Blessings of the last six years first and foremost are present with me the pleasures and consolations of Friendship. How many excellent and kind friends have been tried, and proved to me, within that time! When we came here, you were but a *name* to me!

Mary is to come home on Friday if the weather be tolerable, but I am much afraid that it will not, for it seems to be broken. Yesterday was a beautiful sunny, frosty day, and to-day it rains continually. This will dishearten Mary very much, for I am sure, now that all motives for staying are accomplished she will long painfully after home, and for my part, I shall be very impatient under a disappointment—5 weeks within three days is a long absence. George and Joanna are to come with her in a cart and return on Sunday. Sara cannot be spared till the Sunday following. If Mary had come home a week ago I should have presented Dorothy to her in triumph, she looked so delightfully healthy, but to my utter mortification she has caught cold and is disordered with her teeth, and is not like the same creature. Last night she slept miserably and today she is as fretful as possible. I think I told you that Hannah Lewthwaite helps me to nurse, otherwise indeed I should have been overwrought and had little leisure. With her help I have been very comfortable—have ridden or walked with W. whenever the weather was tolerable, written 8 books of his poem, and read more than usual, so that with intervals of nursing, washing days, keeping things in repair etc., I have had full employment. I was roused from my writing 5 minutes ago by one of John's lamentable cries in the Road. I went to see what ailed him, and there he was walking at a slow pace in his great coat with his black cap half over a dirty face and repeating aloud, 'Is Mary Fisher my wife? Is Mary Fisher my wife?' 'Yes my dear, she's your wife, you know, but she's not at home.' 'Then,' said Johnny continuing to cry, 'Let us go and seek her.' So I went with him to the door and shewed him that it was fastened, which pacified him, but I find that he must have been standing there pleading to be admitted for at least ten minutes—he had left our own

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kitchen so long and had stood in the Rain till his great coat was wet through. He is the best endurer of wet and cold I ever saw—in the frostiest weather he never complains. Luckily he has no chilblains. We put him on his great coat as soon as Breakfast is over, and he goes in and out at his pleasure, the coat never being taken off except when he is in the sitting-room. He is very proud that he ‘*can say Aunt*’, and he will ask me a question on purpose to bring in the word *Aunt* but when he is in any distress it is always ‘Anny! Anny!’ D. can walk upstairs by herself. I have made her a great coat out of an old one of her Mother’s and she trots about in it wherever she goes, except when she is with me in the sitting room. She aims at all words, but does not articulate very distinctly except ‘Ta-Ta’, and that is no word, and ‘Aty’, for she calls me Aty, though she hears nothing but Anny. At first when her Mother went away she always used to look about whenever we asked where Mother was, but now she takes no notice. I hope she will not have forgotten her when she returns. I am *sure* her recollections will revive in the course of half-an-hour. I think it is most likely that she will recollect her even at first. I can never entice John into conversation respecting ‘Mother’ that is not connected with her bringing something home. I have no doubt that his first words to her will be, ‘Have you brought me some pictures, or some pears, or some snaps?’ There is no doubt that Coleridge will land [at] Yarmouth, and it will be very mortifying if he does not [see] you, but to be secure of his getting a letter is impossible as he has given us no address in England but at the Courier Office, London. The only thing that can be done will be for you to write to him, directing at the Post Office, Yarmouth. There is certainly a considerable chance that he may receive the letter. I am exceedingly glad that your dear Boy has improved so much in health and strength. Poor fellow, it is a golden time for him, to be instructed by his good Grandfather, a fine exchange for the confinement of school! Perhaps he would think himself too much of a man to receive kisses from me, but his Mother’s kisses he will yet be proud of, so give him one in remembrance of me and of my tender wishes on this my Birthday, that he may live to be as good a man as his Father and a comfort to both of

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you. The name below was written by your little darling Lass, and

DOROTHY'S KISS

she kissed the kiss. Poor thing! I have just taken her downstairs and she is very fretful. John is all alive at the thought of two plumb-puddings which are now rumbling in the Pot, and a sirloin of beef that is smoking at the fire. Old Molly and John Fisher are in the kitchen, but when dinner is ready they are to come upstairs and partake with us, and '*Johnny and all*'. The evening before the shortest day Molly came in in her brisk way and shook hands with me at six o'clock, the time when we arrived here 6 years ago. 'Aye,' says the poor old creature, 'I mun never forget t'laal striped gown and t'laal straw Bonnet as ye stood here' (by the parlour fire). It was a miserable dark chimney with an handful of reddish cinders in it, for you must know that Molly had kept fires in the houses for a fortnight with *two buckets of coals* that it might be dry and comfortable to receive us. I hope your Husband's printer will go on regularly with his work and that it may be printed correctly. I am afraid Mr. C will be worried and teased about it, and I shall be glad indeed to see it in the shape of a fair Book. You will be sorry to hear that there was a robbery committed in our neighbourhood a few nights ago, and no doubt by Residents in the country. A poor woman who washes for the Bishop of Landaff's family had been to receive 9 guineas which the Bishop owed her, and returning with it in a cart in the evening was stopped by two men, one of whom bound her and the other cut off her pockets. They must have *known* that she was to have the money about her or they would not have thought it worth while to attack such a person. Besides, they never spoke, a proof that they were afraid they would be detected by their voices. I wish my long letters were more legibly written, but indeed long or short, I always write to you in this way. You will almost think that I cannot write a plain letter. The fact is, I scarcely ever do when I am not under some restraint, and before our correspondence began I felt and thought of you as a friend who treated me without disguise and with whom I could feel none. May [God bless] you for ever. Our kindest

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love to Mr. C. and Tom. Remember me to your Father and Brother Bob.

Yours ever

D. Wordsworth.

William scarcely knows what books to recommend to you, but you cannot be wrong, he says, if you read the best old writers, Lord Bacon's *Essays*, his *Advancement of Learning*, etc., for instance, and if you are fond of History read it in the old Memoirs or old Chronicles.

Address: Mrs Clarkson, at Mr Buck's, Bury, Suffolk.

MS. *240. D. W. to Lady Beaumont*

Grasmere, Christmas day, 1805.

Your kind and interesting letters gave me true pleasure; indeed, my dear Lady Beaumont, the proofs which I so frequently receive from you of your sympathy in my daily feelings and common concerns are very affecting to me. You yourself are far removed from many of the cares, anxieties and even pleasures that occupy my mind, which makes your sympathy doubly touching; and for that cause I am the more grateful for it. I began this letter yesterday, on Christmas day, but was interrupted. It is a day of dear and interesting remembrances, and to me peculiarly, therefore I was unwilling to take another sheet of paper for the Date's sake. I yesterday completed my thirty-fourth year—a birthday is to everybody a time of serious thought, but, more so, I should think, when it happens to be upon a day of general festivity, and especially on Christmas day, when all persons, however widely scattered, are in their thoughts gathered together at home. I can almost tell where every Birthday of my life was spent, many of them even *how* from a very early time. The day was always kept by my Brothers with rejoicing in my Father's house, but for six years (the interval between my Mother's death and his) I was never once at home, never was for a single moment under my Father's roof after her death, which I cannot think of without regret for many causes, and particularly that I have thereby been put out of

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the way of many recollections in common with my Brothers of that period of life, which, whatever it may be actually as it goes along, generally appears more delightful than any other when it is over.

Poor Coleridge was with us two years ago at this time—he came over with Derwent on his way to London, and was detained week after week by sickness. We hear no further tidings of him, and I cannot help being very uneasy and anxious: though without any evil, many causes might delay him; yet it is a long time since he left Malta. The weather is dreadful for a sea voyage. Oh my dear Friend, what a fearful thing a windy night is now at our house! I am too often haunted with dreadful images of Shipwrecks and the Sea when I am in bed and hear a stormy wind, and now that we are thinking so much about Coleridge it is worse than ever. My Sister is not yet returned, we expect her at home tomorrow, if the day be tolerable, but wind, rain and snow are driving down the Vale, and the chimney every now and then roars as if it were going to come down upon us. I am very anxious that this boisterous day should be followed by a gentle one (as often happens). I should be exceedingly disappointed if my Sister should not come home—she has stayed much longer than she intended, and is anxious to be with us again and to see the children. John is grown very much during her absence, and Dorothy, till within these three days, has been advancing rapidly, but she is now very poorly having caught cold, and will be quite thrown back again when her Mother sees her, which is mortifying to me. You are very good in taking so much thought about us.—It is true that Miss Hutchinson will be of great use in assisting us in the care of the children; not that when we are both well we are over-fatigued with them but even at [] times it would be better if we had more time for the cultivation of our minds by reading. I do not read much—very little, indeed; but in this house it would be exceedingly unpleasant to have two servants, not to speak of an *insurmountable* objection, the want of room for another person; but as soon as we can meet with a suitable house in a situation that we like, we are resolved to remove, and by keeping a couple of cows (even if my Sister should have

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no more children) we shall have sufficient employment for two servants, and she and I might have much more leisure.

I have been summoned into the kitchen to dance with Johnny, and have danced till I am out of breath. According to annual custom our Grasmere Fiddler is going his rounds, and all the children of the neighbouring houses are assembled in the kitchen to dance. Johnny has long talked of the time when the Fiddler was to come; but he was too shy to dance with anybody but me, and, though he exhibited very boldly when I was downstairs, I find they cannot persuade him to stir again. It is a pleasant sound they make with their little pattering feet upon the stone floor, half a dozen of them, Boys and Girls; Dorothy is in ecstasy, and John looks as grave as an old man.

I am very glad that you hear so frequently from your Sister. If the *Lyrical Ballads* do but give her half the pleasure which you have received from them it will be very gratifying to me. I have no thoughts more soothing than those connected with the hope that my dear Brother and Coleridge may be the means of ministering consolation to the unhappy, or elevating and worthy thoughts to many who live in solitude or retirement, or have too much of the bustle of the world without unhappiness.

I have transcribed two thirds of the Poem addressed to Coleridge, and am far more than pleased with it as I go along. I often think of the time when William shall have the pleasure of reading it to you and Sir George. He is very anxious to get forward with the *Recluse* and is reading for the nourishment of his mind, preparatory to beginning; but I do not think he will be able to do much more till we have heard of Coleridge. My Brother returns his best thanks to Sir George for his letter—he intends answering it very soon; he talked of writing immediately after the receipt of it, to explain what he had said before, as he feared that he had so expressed himself that Sir George had misunderstood his sentiments respecting large houses.

I was exceedingly interested with your Extract from the Newspaper concerning Lord Nelson's last moments—how very affecting the noble Creature's thoughts of his early pleasures, and the happy Fair-day at home. My Brother was at Park house when I received it—he had seen the same account at Penrith;

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but it was not in the *Courier*, the paper we have at Grasmere, therefore your kind attention was a great gain to me.

The day grows worse and worse—I fear we shall have sad tidings from the sea-coast. Heaven grant that Coleridge may be somewhere or other safe on Land! Adieu, my dear Friend—May you enjoy many years of life with health and tranquillity! Coleridge, I believe, was at Dunmow about five weeks after this time two years ago. Oh! that he were with you there now!

Yours ever

Dorothy Wordsworth.

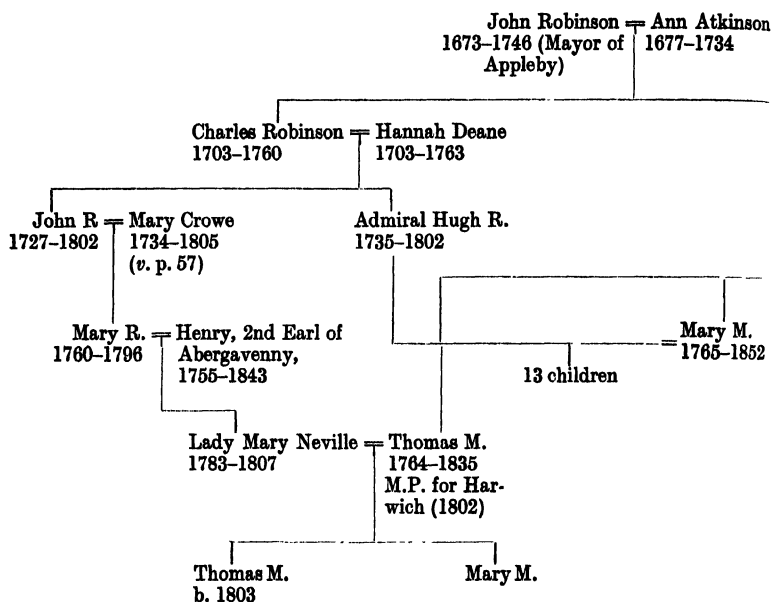
P.S. I had almost forgotten one of the main objects for which I wrote, or rather the only matter of business. My Brother sent the Houbraken¹ by a Gentleman, a Friend of ours, who is to leave it at my Brother's Chambers, No. 11, Staples Inn, London. We did not part with it without anxiety as we had not time to pack it up, for the Gentleman came unexpectedly and did not get out of his carriage, it being late at night, but we gave him the strictest charge to get it properly packed at Kendal, and to take all possible care of it. We have lately had a lesson how little Carriers are to be trusted, having lost a parcel which contained five Books of my Brother's Poem, and the third part of my Journal of our Scotch Tour. Of course we should not have ventured the Poems if we had had no other copy, and a Friend of mine has thought it worth while to take a copy of my Journal, so it is rather a vexatious business than a serious loss, though attended with some inconvenience, for my Friend who has the Journal is in Norfolk, and we are obliged to employ her to get it recopied and send it to us by the Coach. We think it safest that the Book should remain in my Brother's Chambers till it be convenient for you to send for it, otherwise we should have desired him to see that it was delivered.

Address: Lady Beaumont, Dunmow, Essex.

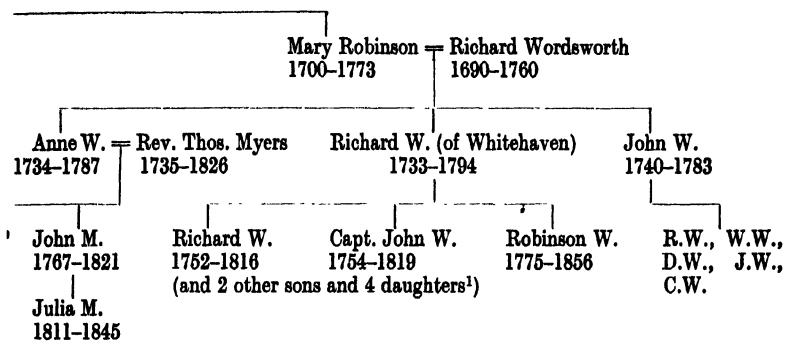
¹ A copy of Houbraken and Vertue's *Heads of Illustrious Persons* given by W. W. to Sir G. B. (v. Letter 224).

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

TABLE SHOWING THE RELATION OF THE ROBINSON,

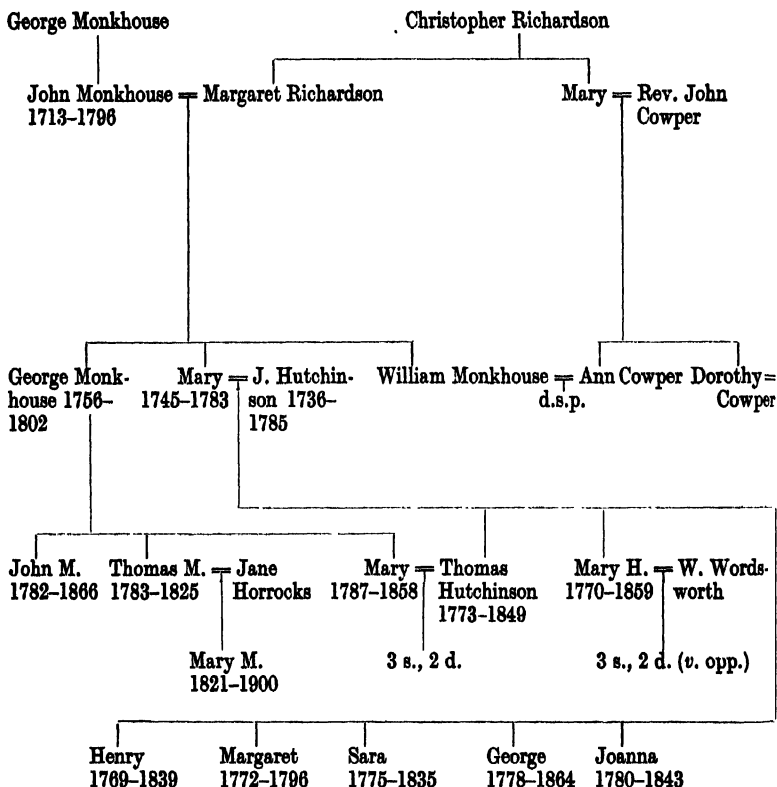


MYERS, AND WORDSWORTH FAMILIES



¹ Mary 1766-1799 (*m.* John Smith of Broughton-in-Furness); Elizabeth 1763-1834 (*m.* Francis Barker of Rampside) (*v.* p. 118).

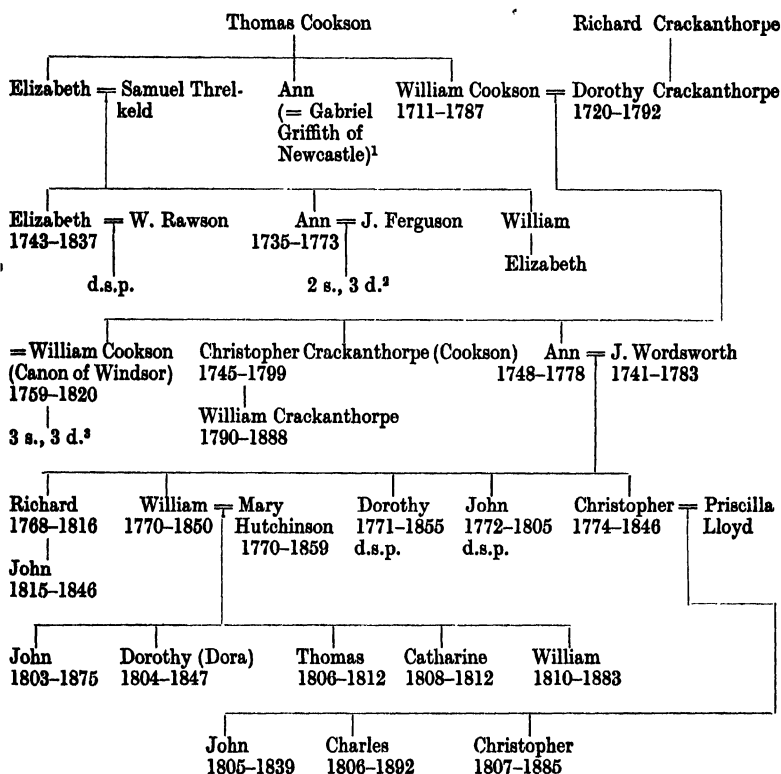
ABRIDGED TABLE SHOWING THE CONNEXIONS HUTCHINSON, COOKSON,



N.B. It will be noticed that William Monkhouse, uncle of Mary Hutchinson, and William Cookson, uncle of Dorothy Wordsworth, married two sisters, Ann and Dorothy Cowper, William Monkhouse and Ann Cowper being already first cousins.

Subsequently Thomas Hutchinson, brother of Mrs. Wordsworth, married Mary Monkhouse, his first cousin.

BETWEEN THE FAMILIES OF MONKHOUSE, AND WORDSWORTH



¹ The Mr. and Misses Griffith mentioned in the *Letters* were the children of this marriage.

² Samuel, Edward, Anne, Elizabeth, and Martha.

³ Mary (1790), Christopher (1791), William (1792), Elizabeth (1793), George (1794), Anne (1795).

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